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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to obtain more information on early school leavers in order to formulate strategies to decrease the dropout rate. The typical pattern for leavers is to complete some portion of the school year before dropping out. The greatest dropout activity occurs in January, February, and March. Typical school leavers: (1) are bored with school; (2) find school activities and classes a waste of time; (3) are behind in school credits; (4) make poor grades; and (5) have numerous home and family responsibilities. Most leavers held very positive attitudes about education, learning, and the importance of a high school diploma; 84 percent would not advise friends or relatives to leave high school before graduating. While 71.5 percent of early school leavers had attempted in some way to find employment, only 29.4 percent had obtained full-time employment and 21.7 percent, part-time employment. These leavers, however, were not taking action to exert more control over their lives. The leavers voiced future plans vaguely, most of them saying that they hoped to graduate some time in the future. The report concludes that although the youngsters studied placed a high value on education, they had many complaints, difficulties, and problems with their experience in high school. (LHW)

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FOLLOW UP OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS FROM THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLICATION NO. 457

RESEARCH & EVALUATION BRANCH

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

UD 025 213

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FOLLOW-UP OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS From The Los Angeles Unified School District

Publication No. 457

by

Romeria Tidwell, PhD

A Report Prepared for the
Research and Evaluation Branch
Los Angeles Unified School District

July 1985

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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HARRY HANDLER
Superintendent

APPROVED:

FLORALINE I. STEVENS
Director
Research and Evaluation Branch

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FOREWORD

As part of the Dropout Task Force effort, a follow-up study of early school leavers was commissioned by the Los Angeles Unified School District's Research and Evaluation Branch with Dr. Romeria Tidwell, Associate Professor in the School of Education, at U.C.L.A. The school district wanted the follow-up study of early school leavers to focus on whether or not they were truly dropouts, why they left school, and what the school district could do to keep potential dropouts from leaving school before graduating. In other words, the study would provide information for effective planning to prevent students from dropping out and to reduce the number of school dropouts.

The follow-up study of early school leavers was conducted during a very difficult time in Los Angeles, the summer of the 1984 Olympics. However, yeoman commitment and much enthusiasm for the task enabled the study staff to gather successfully the necessary data. The results of their efforts follow. Some of the information in the study has been read before. Some of the information validates previous studies. However, some of the information provides us with new insight into the type of school climate needed to keep our students in school until they graduate. This is important information.

Floraline Stevens
Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As is true with any scholarly undertaking, the assistance needed to complete the endeavor must draw upon the cooperation and effort of several persons. This work, the Follow-Up of Early School Leavers, is no exception.

I am grateful to Yolanda Nunn, a doctoral student in the UCLA Graduate School of Education, for working with me during several phases of this project. The able assistance she provided during the training and during the implementation of the study contributed much to the completion of the study. Gratitude for assistance with the literature on early school leavers is extended to Patricia Nolan, another graduate student from UCLA.

A sincere thank you is offered to the Pupil Services and Attendance counselors and relief clerks who served as the research staff for this investigation. Because I am especially grateful for the dedication and hard work these individuals showed when interacting with the students, failure to cite their names would be an unforgiveable oversight. Their names are Allen Barham, Beverly Blackshear, Paula Carmody, Carmen Dashiell, Joe De Baca, Rosemarie Durocher, Angie Enriquez, Cheryl Fayson, Cynthia Gaines, Alma Jones, Charles McArthur, Leo Markman, Rick Marlow, Lorraine Ono, Marguerite Polk, Linda Rodriguez, Sonia Saavedra, Katrina Scott, and Carolyn Williams. Gratitude for the coordination of the research staff is extended to Carolyn Powell.

Dr. Floraline Stevens, Director of the Research and Evaluation Branch of the Los Angeles Unified School District, and her staff contributed much to the completion of this study. Dr. Leo Weisbender, Assistant Director and

Dr. William Renfroe, in the Survey Unit must be recognized for handling the the many tasks involving staff organization, data analysis, and editing. Special thanks to the clerical staff for typing the drafts and the final report. Thanks to Dr. Lionel Joubert who was always there during the final steps of the project.

In conclusion, I especially thank the students who volunteered to participate in this investigation. They are to be commended for so freely sharing their insights and experiences. It is my hope that the students' contributions will assist District personnel and other educators in implementing the strategies needed, both mental and behavioral, to enhance the education of our young people.

Romeria Tidwell
July 1985

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Parents, educators, mental health professionals, and American society as a whole have always considered it highly desirable that the nation's young people receive a formal education. In working towards this goal the school systems of the United States have achieved notable success. The number of youngsters who are enrolled in high schools has increased from 11% in 1900 to 94% in 1978 (Grand & Eiden, 1980).

Success is only relative, however. Our society has not been totally successful in getting its students to complete their high school education. Recently increased attention has been focused on those youngsters who leave school early without their high school diplomas in hand -- youngsters commonly referred to as school dropouts. The LAUSD studies from 1974 through 1984 indicate that the problem of the early school leavers was most prevalent among minority youth, particularly Blacks and Hispanics. These widespread racial differences still remain. Rumberger (1983), presenting data from the 1978 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, found that among all youth from 14 to 21 years of age in 1979, 11% were high school dropouts. The White dropout rate was proportionately lower (10%) than for the total 1979 group. Yet, the minority dropout rate was substantially higher (15% for Blacks and 23% for Hispanics). School dropout rates for the 18 to 21 year old 1979 age group were even higher. Among this group, one out of every four Black youth lacked a high school diploma and more than one out of every three Hispanic youth did not have a diploma in hand.

What is important to remember, however, is that the school dropout problem is not an issue exclusively confined to minority and/or disadvantaged youth. The incidence of early school leaving is increasing among middle-class White youth. Current trends indicate an upswing in the dropout rate: up by 15% from the 1975-76 school year to the 1978-79 school year according to enrollment data from Ohio (Kaeser, 1980), and an increase in attrition from 12% in 1967 to 22% in 1976 in California (Camp, 1980). The national census data confirm that the percentage of dropouts at the high school level for White males has increased from 6.3% in 1970 to 9.6% in 1978 (Grand & Eiden, 1980).

Research on Early School Leavers

Nowhere is there greater concern about the early school leaver (the school dropout) than that found in the academic community. It is academicians, especially those interested in educational issues, whose research has produced significant and meaningful knowledge related to the early school leaver. With this knowledge, there can be a better understanding of the multitude of reasons (the "whys") that are always present when students make that ultimate decision to leave school without their high school diplomas. One such researcher is Rumberger, who in 1983 completed an investigation that was specifically designed to ascertain what factors come into play when students leave their high school campuses. There is also the work of Trotter (1981) who examined the attitudinal differences between high- and low-achieving Black male high school students with respect to their perceptions about their high school offerings and their academic performance. Lastly, there are scholars like Henson and Astin (1978), who after gathering information from both high school and college students,

postulated that because of the low participation rates of minority students in high schools, it follows that significant numbers of these students are lost as freshmen and graduate students in institutions of higher learning. Reasons that dropouts themselves give for leaving high school before graduating include poor school performance, dislike of school, expulsion, desire to work, financial difficulties, home responsibilities, pregnancy and marriage (Borus, Crowley, Rumberger, Santos, and Shapiro, 1980). It is clear that research efforts in general, then, have focused more on the factors underlying students' stated reasons for leaving school, in the belief that understanding these factors will supply answers to researchers, parents, and educators on how best to reduce dropping out. Evidence for the most important of these factors is reviewed here.

1. School Related Factors. Poor school achievement is often indicative of early school leaving (Bachman, Green & Wirtanen, 1971; Howell & Frese, 1982). More important are the patterns of achievement, especially in cases where students are required to repeat grades and/or classes. Schreiber (1964) found that poor students who fail either of the first two grades of high school have only a 20% chance of graduating. He also discovered that failures in the eighth and ninth grades are crucial to the students' decisions to drop out. Kaplan and Luck (1977) reported from the result of a Maryland study that half of its school dropouts had been held back or had repeated classes at least once. Consistent with these findings were those of Curley, who in 1971, showed that dropouts were held back four times more often than those students who eventually graduated. Repeating grades even as far back as at the primary level is also predictive of dropping out (Howell & Frese, 1982; Stroup & Robins, 1972).

The role of ability in predicting school dropout behavior has also been widely investigated. Data from available research refer consistently to a lower average intelligence quotient (IQ) for the high school dropout (Sewell, Palmo, & Manni, 1981; & Hill, 1979). While an explanation that a lower IQ may have intuitive appeal as the cause of early school leaving, this explanation obviously fails to adequately account for the fact that many school dropouts are intellectually capable and/or performing at an average or above-average level academically (Sewell et al., 1981). Elliott and Voss (1974) have put the intellectually capable and average- or above-average figure as high as three-fourths of all those dropping out of school. There is also the work of Hathaway, Reynolds, and Monachesi who, in 1969, found that 14% of the dropouts from their sample had IQ test scores at or above the 69th percentile when compared to their age group in high school. Black students who leave the school system show trends of being even more intellectually capable based on standardized IQ assessment than their peers who remain in school (Gerlach, 1980). Also involved in the area of poor academic performance and its relationship to school dropouts are such factors as learning disabilities and multiple handicaps. Such factors have not been well researched.

Negative school behavior has been found to be a predictor of dropping out. Rates of delinquency are far higher among dropouts than among those who remain in the system (Bachman, Green & Wirtenen, 1972). It is not surprising then that in 1977 Kaplan and Luck found that one-fourth of all school dropouts were suspended from school at least once, and that an additional one-fifth had been determined by their teachers to be "classroom problem students."

Attitudes students have toward school and the degree of the students' social integration into the school environment are also factors related to early school departure. A recent study conducted by the Center of Human Resource Research at Ohio State University (1980) produced data indicating that large numbers of American male youth reported leaving school because they "disliked" it. Of this group, 29% were Black, 26% Hispanic, and 36% were White. Thus, it is not surprising that Jones in 1977 stated that dropouts nearly always have beliefs of alienation (rootlessness, hopelessness, and estrangement) from their schools, homes, neighborhoods and from society in general. The causation of these perceptions is grounded in the youths' beliefs of having suffered great injustices in their lives. These students frequently report feelings of rejection because of race, language, culture, or religion. All in all they are extremely susceptible to alienation. Potential dropouts' beliefs about not really belonging are often further compounded by the school setbacks these students experience and the subsequent separation they experience with their peers. In addition, potential dropouts have social and communication skills that are oftentimes inferior in comparison to those around them. Because of these widespread feelings of estrangement, these students seldom, if ever, participate in extracurricular activities (Cervantes, 1965). To these students, school is nothing more than an overdemanding, unfriendly environment where they are destined to fail.

2. Family Background Factors. Rumberger's research (1983) has consistently found that students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds are more likely to leave school prematurely than are

students from high SES backgrounds. Rumberger offers a number of explanations to this finding.

He notes, however, that none can be proven to the exclusion of any other. First, the more highly educated the parents, the more likely they are to serve as positive role models -- influencing the aspiration levels of their children for advanced schooling, spending more quality time with their children, and increasing the academic abilities and opportunities of their children. Second, because higher SES families usually live in more affluent communities and, in turn, have better financed schools, the children from these families are likely to have quality, supportive, and rewarding educational experiences. On the other hand, children from poorer families may feel it necessary and may find it necessary that they (the children) become employed in order to supplement the family income, as many Hispanic dropouts have indicated (Borus et al., 1980).

Other family variables found to be of importance in understanding early school leavers include educational attainment of both parents (Hill, 1979; Mare, 1980), family income (Lerman, 1972; Stroup & Robins, 1972); and family structure (Howell & Frese, 1982). Children from homes where only a single parent is present are least likely to remain in the formal school setting until graduation. This may be due to financial difficulties commonly found in single-parent families rather than due to the structure of the homes <u>per se</u> (Shaw, 1982). Other aspects of family background generally associated with early school leaving are family size, housing conditions, and geographic location (Hill, 1979; Mare, 1980). Early marriage and pregnancy have also been found to be

strongly linked with early school leavers (Marini, 1978; Howell & Frese, 1982; Rumberger, 1983; and Waite & Moore, 1978).

3. Consequences for the Early School Leaver. Research studies support the widely held view that leaving high school without a diploma in hand has several consequences. The costs of dropping out include difficulty in finding employment, being relegated to lower status and lower paying jobs, and having less opportunity for advancement than high school graduates. Dropouts also have lower life-time earnings, and are more likely to be the recipients of public assistance and welfare programs (Beck & Muia, 1980).

More school dropouts are also unemployed. A further problem, then, for these dropouts is idleness -- how best to spend the many hours that were once taken up with schoolwork and school-related activities. Biddle, Bank, Anderson, Keats, & Keats (1981) found that early school leavers in the United States are more disadvantaged in comparison to their counterparts in other countries. Few inexpensive opportunities for recreation are available to adolescents in the United States compared to other countries. School dropouts in the United States are thus more likely to engage in anti-social behavior. In addition, dropouts face other problems because of negative judgments of others as well as negative judgments about themselves. Students who leave high school before graduating are more likely to experience discrimination; to receive disapproval from parents, friends, and society; and to devalue themselves because of their decision to leave school.

Long term effects for early school leavers are also important to determine even though they are still not entirely certain. Not all

investigators are convinced that students who leave school without diplomas are disadvantaged in America. Several studies have determined that only minor differences exist among students in measures of life success when contrasting those who drop out from those who remain in high school (Blake, 1973; Lovett, 1955; & Mueller, 1983). Moreover, Bachman, Green and Wirtanen (1971) concluded from longitudinal data that dropping out is a symptom of problems faced before leaving school and has few intrinsic effects on subsequent attitudes, job success, or delinquent behavior. It must be noted, however, that these studies tend to be quite dated. The importance of having a high school diploma is likely to be quite different in the 1980's from what it was in the 1970's.

District-Level Concern for Early School Leavers

There is concern for early school leavers (dropouts) not only within the academic community, but also at the school district level. For example, the Research and Evaluation Branch of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) prepared a report in 1982 that presented two summarizations. The first were findings since 1963 which related to the topic of potential early school leavers. The second was a summary of the District's own research on the topic of early school leavers since the year 1965. (See the Research and Evaluation Branch report, Early School Leavers: High School Students who Left High School Before Graduating, 1980-81, Report No. 406, Los Angeles, California, December 1982.)

Previous research findings presented in LAUSD's Report No. 406 indicated that the most likely potential early leavers were students who

1. have poor attendance or behavior problems
2. have significant academic and achievement deficits
3. are members of ethnic minority groups as well as of lower socioeconomic levels
4. have parents who don't have the wherewithal to provide the resources important for academic success.

Previous LAUSD studies (according to LAUSD's Report No. 406) indicate that early school leavers were students who

1. left school because of personal family problems
2. were unable to cope with school
3. believed they would be happier out of school
4. had parents less likely to be white collar workers
5. had parents with very low incomes
6. were more likely to be Hispanic or Black
7. were more likely to be male
8. had poor reading ability, and high absenteeism
9. were older than peers

For the last 3 years the Research and Evaluation Branch of LAUSD has used a district form entitled Record of Transfer to compile information on the number of students who leave the District early -- without their high school diplomas. This information is gathered monthly from each of the District's 49 regular high schools and 83 other schools (i.e., continuation, magnet) with students in grades 10-12. Presently, students who left school early can be classified into three groups. First are the "check-outs",

students who have withdrawn to perhaps attend another school or a continuation school, and for whom records had not been requested. Second are the "nonenrollees", students who have not enrolled in school after an academic break. Third are the "absentees", students with extremely high rates of absenteeism. Students, their parents, relatives or neighbors are interviewed to determine the specific reason for the student leaving school. (See Record of Transfer, Appendix 1.) Even though this procedure is in place within LAUSD, two important questions remain unanswered. First, are early school leavers truly dropouts? In other words, do students who leave school and do not enroll into another regular high school attend another less traditional school setting such as an adult education school or a local trade school? Second, do early school leavers actually terminate their formal education? Or do early leavers merely not enroll in school after an academic break? Or are early leavers those youngsters with high rates of current absenteeism? The LAUSD desires the answers to these questions. The district designates students who leave school with no records of transferring to another school as L8 students -- students who are UNKNOWN and DROP.

Purpose of Present Study

The primary purpose of this investigation was to provide for the LAUSD current information on issues related to the group of students labled as "EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS." Four specific questions were addressed:

1. Are early school leavers bona fide school dropouts? (Youngsters who are no longer enrolled in any educational process that might lead to the acquisition of a high school diploma).

2. What are the primary reasons students from the LAUSD in particular, give for deciding to leave high school before graduating?

3. What might the LAUSD do to <u>retain</u> students until graduation?

4. What might the LAUSD do to <u>return</u> early school leavers to their respective high schools?

In addition to these primary questions, pertinent student demographic information, such as marital status, employment history, family constellation was also obtained. It is assumed that the district will use the study's findings in formulating hypotheses in the testing of strategies that ultimately will result in a decrease in the dropout rate. And, that this information should prove helpful to understanding better current life styles of students who are true school dropouts.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL AND SUBJECT SAMPLES

In this chapter of the report is presented a detailed description of the sample of schools and of the subjects used to investigate the early school leavers sample.

School Sample

Twelve target schools were identified by the Research and Evaluation Branch of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to serve as participating schools for this investigation. Six were previously involved in an earlier study which focused on nonattendance at the senior high level, (Research and Evaluation Branch, Los Angeles Unified School District, 1974. Study of Senior High School Absentees and School Leavers, Report No. 343, Los Angeles, California). The remaining six senior high schools were selected because of their high "early school leaver" rates. Five geographic regions within the district are represented by the 12 participating senior high schools.

Presented in Table 1 are the names, by geographic regions, of the senior high schools used in this sample. (Note that all tables follow the References.) Also shown for each region and school are the total number and percentage of "yes" and "no" responses given by students to indicate their willingness to serve as subjects in this study, and the total number and percentage of telephone contacts made to participating and nonparticipating students. The data presented indicate that the percentage of participating students from the five regions ranged from 19.3% to 11.3%, with the

Table 1

School Sample by Geographic Region, Leaver Responses for Scheduled Interviews and Number of Telephone Contacts

Name of Senior High Schools N = 12	Leaver Responses for Scheduled Interviews				Total Number of Telephone Contacts	
	Yes	%	No	%	N	%
Region: Central	54	14.6	316	85.4	370	15.4
Fremont[a]	20	11.2	159	88.8	179	
Washington	34	17.8	157	82.2	191	
Region: East Los Angeles	68	19.3	284	80.7	352	14.7
Garfield	20	17.4	95	82.6	115	
Roosevelt[a]	48	20.2	189	79.8	237	
Region: Harbor	46	11.3	361	88.7	407	16.9
Banning	24	18.5	106	81.5	130	
Narbonne	22	7.9	255	92.1	277	
Region: Valley	124	15.3	689	84.7	813	33.9
Chatsworth	13	6.6	184	93.4	197	
Granada Hills[a]	24	11.4	187	88.6	211	
Grant	47	28.3	119	71.7	166	
Polytechnic[a]	40	16.7	199	83.3	239	
Region: West Los Angeles	82	17.9	377	82.1	459	19.1
Hamilton[a]	30	16.7	150	83.3	180	
Los Angeles	52	18.6	227	81.2	279	
Total	374	15.6	2,027	84.4	2,401	100.0

[a]Participated in the Los Angeles Unified School District, 1974, Report No. 343.

greatest involvement coming from senior high schools located in the East Los Angeles region and the least involvement from the harbor region. Of the 2,401 students contacted, 15.6% (N= 374) volunteered to participate in this early school leaver study.

Subject Sample

The students contacted were selected from the monthly Record of Transfer forms submitted to Research and Evaluation Branch every school month. The Record of Transfer Form (34-H-136) indicate the L8 students and the reasons for leaving.

A total of 374 senior high school students served as subjects for this study. The coded reasons for early leavers as indicated on the Record of Transfer form (34-H-136) are, full time employment, institutionalized pupil, marriage, medical exclusion, military service, overage, whereabouts unknown, and other reasons, such as deceased.

The 2,401 early leavers from the twelve schools in the study served as the pool from which leaver subjects were selected.

Table 2 presents the distribution of early school leavers by target high school and by region. As can be seen, the frequency of leavers varied from region to region and from high school to high school. Most of the 374 leavers were from the four valley region schools (N =124), while the two Harbor schools were minimally represented. (N= 46.) Yet, with regard to percentages, the school having the least number of leavers was a valley school (Chatsworth, N= 13) and the school with the highest frequency was a West Los Angeles school (Los Angeles High, N= 52).

Table 2

Leaver Sample by School and Geographic Region

Name of Schools N = 12	Leaver N	Leaver %
Region: Central	54	14.4
Fremont	20	5.3
Washington	34	9.1
Region: East Los Angeles	68	18.2
Garfield	20	5.3
Roosevelt	48	12.8
Region: Harbor	46	12.3
Banning	24	6.4
Narbonne	22	5.9
Region: Valley	124	33.1
Chatsworth	13	3.5
Granada Hills	24	6.4
Grant	47	12.6
Polytechnic	40	10.7
Region: West Los Angeles	82	22.0
Hamilton	30	8.0
Los Angeles	52	13.9
Total	374	100.0

A comprehensive description of the subjects in the sample can be gained by presenting demographic characteristics and other relevant information in four categories -- total leaver sample, gender, ethnicity, and ethnicity-by-gender.

A. Total Sample Descriptors. The distribution of the total leaver sample by gender, ethnicity, and birthdate is presented in Table 3. An inspection of this table reveals several notable features regarding the sample's race, sex, and age distributions.

As can be seen, there was a somewhat higher proportion of males (N= 210, 56.1%) than females (N= 164, 43.9%) among the 374 subjects. Nearly one-half were Hispanic (45.1%). The remaining half were Black and White youngsters with an equal number coming from the two racial groups (25.4% and 25.9%, respectively). The numbers of American Indian/Alaskan Native and Asian/Pacific Islander participants were substantially low, comprising only 3.6% of the total sample. In addition, at the time this investigation was conducted, nearly three-fourths (74.6%) of the sample subjects were 18 years or older. The remaining 25.4% were 16 or 17 years of age.

Table 4 presents the summary data for the total sample, broken down by the last grade in which students were enrolled and the month of the academic year (1983-84) that students were deleted from a high school's enrollment roster. The table shows an almost equal number of students left school from each of the three grades -- 119 (31.8%) from the 10th grade, 127 (34%) from the 11th, and 128 (34.2%) from the 12th grade. The proportion of students leaving school varied during the academic

Table 3

Total Leaver Sample by Gender, Ethnicity and Birthdate

Item	Leaver N	Leaver %
Gender		
Female	164	43.9
Male	210	56.1
Total	374	100.0
Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5	1.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	8	2.2
Black (not of Hispanic origin)	94	25.4
Hispanic	167	45.1
White (not of Hispanic origin)	96	25.9
Total[a]	370	100.0
Birthdate		
1963	3	0.8
1964	21	5.6
1965	127	34.0
1966	128	34.2
1967	68	18.2
1968	27	7.2
Total	374	100.0

[a]Missing data

Table 4

Last Enrolled Grade and Last Enrollment Date for Total Leaver Sample

Item	Leaver N	Leaver %
Last Enrolled Grade		
10th	119	31.8
11th	127	34.0
12th	128	34.2
Total	374	100.0
Last Enrollment Date (Academic Year 1983-84)		
1983 - September	9	2.4
1983 - October	35	9.3
1983 - November	33	8.8
1983 - December	21	5.6
1984 - January	76	20 3
1984 - February	44	11.8
1984 - March	44	11.8
1984 - April	29	7.8
1984 - May	54	14.4
1984 - June	29	7.8
Total	374	100.0

Note. Data taken from written records maintained by LAUSD.

year. One-fifth of this sample (N= 76, 20.3%) was officially dropped from the schools' rosters during January. Other noteworthy times are May, near the close of the school year (14.4%), and February and March. Table 5 presents information of a more personal note. Nearly one-half of the early leavers (44.4%) live with both parents, and more than a third (37.1%) live with their mothers. Table 5 also indicates that the educational levels of leavers' mothers and fathers were almost identical. In general, the majority of leavers come from two types of homes -- with 1-2 (39.3%) and 3-4 (31.5%) children, respectively.

B. Gender Descriptors. Tables 6, 7, and 8 present summary data for the total leaver sample according to gender. The distribution of leavers by gender for the five ethnic groups, by birthdates, is presented in Table 6. An analysis of this table reveals several important features about this particular sample of early school leavers. First, by examining gender and ethnic group affiliation, it is interesting to note that the ethnic distribution is identical for males and females.

Table 6 also shows that, in general, the male and female early school leavers in this study were older than students typically found on high school campuses. The majority of males (69%) and females (65.9%) were 18 or 19 years of age at the time the study was conducted.

The same pattern held true, i.e., no distinguishable differences between male and female subjects, when the sample was examined according to the the last enrolled grade of the early school leavers and those months of the academic year in which there tended to be the highest school leaver rates. It is clear from the data presented in Table 7 that both the

Table 5

Resident Adult, Level of Parent Education and Number of Siblings for Total Leaver Sample

Item	Leaver N	Leaver %
Resident Adult for Leavers		
Both parents	164	44.4
Mother	137	37.1
Father	14	3.8
Grandparent(s)	8	2.2
Other	46	12.5
Total[a]	369	100.0
Parent Education		
Father:		
K-12 years	243	85.3
13-16 years	35	12.3
17-18 years	5	1.8
19-20 years	2	0.7
Total[a]	285	100.0
Mother:		
K-12 years	307	86.7
13-16 years	43	12.1
17-18 years	4	1.1
19-20 years	0	0.0
Total[a]	354	100.0
Number of Siblings		
0	2	0.6
1- 2	137	39.3
3- 4	110	31.5
5- 6	59	16.9
7- 8	27	7.7
9-10	8	2.3
11-12	4	1.1
13-14	2	0.6
Total[a]	349	100.0

[a]Missing data.

Table 6

Leaver Sample by Gender
(Summarized Across Ethnic Group and Birthdate)

Item	Male (N = 210) N	%	Female (N = 164) N	%
Ethnic Group				
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3	1.4	2	1.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	5	2.4	3	1.9
Black	56	26.8	38	23.6
Hispanic	87	41.6	80	49.7
White	58	27.8	38	23.6
Total	209	100.0	161	100.0
Birthdate				
1961	1	0.5	0	0.0
1962	0	0.0	0	0.0
1963	2	1.0	1	0.6
1964	16	7.6	5	3.0
1965	70	33.3	56	34.2
1966	75	35.7	52	31.7
1967	36	17.1	33	20.1
1968	10	4.8	17	10.4
Total	210	100.0	164	100.0

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Table 7

Leaver Sample by Gender
(Summarized Across Last Enrolled Grade and Last Enrollment Date)

Item	Male (N = 210) N	Male (N = 210) %	Female (N = 164) N	Female (N = 164) %
Last Enrolled Grade				
10th	65	31.0	54	32.9
11th	73	34.8	54	32.9
12th	72	34.3	56	34.1
Total	210	100.0	164	100.0
Last Enrollment Date (Academic Year 1983-84)				
1983 - September	1	0.5	8	4.9
1983 - October	22	10.5	13	7.9
1983 - November	19	9.0	14	8.5
1983 - December	13	6.2	8	4.9
1984 - January	41	19.5	35	21.3
1984 - February	29	13.8	15	9.2
1984 - March	27	12.9	17	10.4
1984 - April	14	6.7	15	9.2
1984 - May	29	13.8	25	15.2
1984 - June	15	7.1	14	8.5
Total	210	100.0	164	100.0

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male and female subjects tended to withdraw equally from the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Likewise, for the males and females, the highest official exodus from the schools occurred during January and May of the school year.

Table 8 shows a minor difference between the two sexes when the leavers' home situations were explored. Slightly more females (46.6%) than males (42.7%) reside with both parents, and fewer females (1.8%) than males (5.3%) reside with their fathers. No apparent differences exist between the male and female subjects with regard to their parents' level of education or the subjects' number of siblings.

C. Ethnicity Descriptors. The assessment of the early school leavers for 1983-84 also required an analysis of the sample using an ethnicity-by-gender perspective. In other words, do differences exist according to racial group membership and sex of the subjects? For example, do Black females differ from Black males with regard to their departure from school? Or, do most White males and/or Hispanic males reside with both parents, their mothers, or other adults? The answers appear in Tables 9, 10, and 11.

Table 9 clearly shows that, for each of the five ethnic groups in the study, male school leavers were in the majority. Clearly, the difference between the leaver rate for males and females was lowest for the 167 Hispanic students. Only a 4.2% difference between the number of Hispanic males (N= 87, 52.1%) and Hispanic females (N= 80, 47.9%).

The differences in the leaver rate between the sexes was more pronounced for the remaining four racial groups. The differences between male and

Table 8

Leaver Sample by Gender
(Summarized Across Resident Adult, Level of Parent Education and Number of Siblings)

Item	Male (N = 210) N	Male (N = 210) %	Female (N = 164) N	Female (N = 164) %
Resident Adult for Leaver				
Both Parents	88	42.7	76	46.6
Mother	79	38.3	58	35.6
Father	11	5.3	3	1.8
Grandparents(s)	5	2.4	3	1.8
Other	23	11.2	23	14.1
Total	206	100.0	163	100.0
Parent Education				
Father:				
K-12 years	135	84.9	108	85.7
13-16 years	19	11.9	16	12.7
17-18 years	4	2.5	1	0.8
19-29 years	1	0.6	1	0.8
Total	159	100.0	126	100.0
Mother:				
K-12 years	170	86.3	137	87.3
13-16 years	24	12.2	19	12.1
17-18 years	3	1.5	1	0.6
19-20 years	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	197	100.0	157	100.0
Number of Siblings				
0	0	0.0	2	1.3
1- 2	78	40.6	59	37.6
3- 4	60	31.3	50	31.8
5- 6	34	17.7	25	15.9
7- 8	13	6.8	14	8.9
9-10	4	2.1	4	2.6
11-12	2	1.0	2	1.3
13-14	1	0.5	1	0.6
Total	192	100.0	157	100.0

Table 9

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity
(Summarized Across Gender and Birthdate)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)		Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)		Black (N = 94)		Hispanic (N = 167)		White (N = 96)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender										
Female	2	40.0	3	37.5	38	40.4	80	47.9	38	39.6
Male	3	60.0	5	62.6	56	59.6	87	52.1	58	60.4
Total	5	100.0	8	100.0	94	100.0	167	100.0	96	100.0
Birthdate										
1961	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
1962	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
1963	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.2	1	1.0
1964	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	4.3	9	5.4	9	9.4
1965	2	40.0	4	50.0	36	38.3	66	39.5	18	18.8
1966	2	40.0	3	37.0	31	33.0	47	28.1	42	43.7
1967	0	0.0	1	12.5	16	17.0	28	16.8	21	21.9
1968	1	20.0	0	0.0	7	7.4	15	9.0	4	4.2
Total	5	100.0	8	100.0	94	100.0	167	100.0	96	100.0

female students for these groups were Asian/Pacific Islander, 25.0%; White, 80.8%; American Indian/Alaskan Native, 20.0%; and Black, 19.2%.

Another feature worth mentioning is chronological age as it relates to racial group membership. For this sample, the highest percentages of leavers from four of the five ethnic groups were 18 and 19 years old. The one exception was the White leaver group. The majority of these subjects were 17 and 18 years old.

It is interesting to note that the pattern established by Hispanic leavers varied in comparison with the other four groups from the secondary level. For the other four groups the lowest percentage of leavers left school during the 10th grade and the highest percentage during the 12th grade. The opposite was true for Hispanic leavers. The greatest number (43.1%) left during the 10th grade and the lowest number during the 12th grade (25.1%). As previously found, it was during January, February, March, and May that the largest percentages of leavers were officially terminated from school. The information concerning last enrolled grade and last enrollment date is shown in Table 10.

An analysis of the data displayed in Table 11 shows the following trends:

(1) The majority of leavers from the American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic and White ethnic groups lived with both parents. However, a higher percentage of Black leavers lived with their mothers rather than with both parents.

Table 10

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity
(Summarized Across Last Enrolled Grade and Last Enrollment Date)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)		Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)		Black (N = 94)		Hispanic (N = 167)		White (N = 96)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Last Enrollment Grade										
10th	1	20.0	1	12.5	24	25.5	72	43.1	20	20.8
11th	3	60.0	3	37.5	33	35.1	53	31.7	33	34.4
12th	1	20.0	4	50.0	37	39.4	42	25.1	43	44.8
Total	5	100.0	8	100.0	94	100.0	167	100.0	96	100.0
Last Enrollment Date (Academic Year 1983-84)										
1983 - September	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	5.3	3	1.7	0	0.0
1983 - October	0	0.0	1	12.5	10	10.7	21	12.6	2	2.1
1983 - November	0	0.0	1	12.5	6	6.4	20	12.0	6	6.3
1983 - December	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.1	12	7.2	8	8.3
1984 - January	1	20.0	3	37.5	13	13.8	34	20.3	23	24.0
1984 - February	2	40.0	1	12.5	15	16.0	10	6.0	16	16.7
1984 - March	1	20.0	1	12.5	14	14.9	17	10.2	11	11.5
1984 - April	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	7.4	14	8.4	8	8.3
1984 - May	1	20.0	1	12.5	15	16.0	24	14.4	12	12.5
1984 - June	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	7.4	12	7.2	10	10.4
Total	5	100.0	8	100.0	94	100.0	167	100.0	96	100.0

Table 11

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity
(Summarized Across Resident Adult, Level of Parent Education and Number of Siblings)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5) N	%	Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8) N	%	Black (N = 94) N	%	Hispanic (N = 167) N	%	White (N = 9) N	%
Resident Adult for Leaver										
Both parents	2	50.0	6	75.0	34	36.2	84	50.9	37	39.4
Mother	2	50.0	0	0.0	42	44.7	51	30.9	40	42.6
Father	0	50.0	0	0.0	5	5.3	2	1.2	7	7.4
Grandparent(s)	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.1	4	2.4	2	2.1
Other	0	0.0	2	25.0	11	11.7	24	14.5	8	8.5
Total	4	100.0	8	100.0	94	100.0	165	100.0	94	100.0
Parent Education										
Father:										
K-12 years	3	100.0	5	62.5	65	84.4	122	99.2	45	64.3
13-16 years	0	0.0	3	37.5	10	13.0	1	0.8	21	30.0
17-18 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.6	0	0.0	2	2.9
19-20 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.9
Total	3	100.0	8	100.0	77	100.0	123	100.0	70	100.0
Mother:										
k-12 years	4	100.0	5	62.5	83	88.3	155	99.4	57	64.8
13-16 years	0	0.0	3	37.5	11	11.7	1	0.6	28	31.8
17-18 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.4
19-20 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	4	100.0	8	100.0	94	100.0	156	100.0	88	100.0
Number of Siblings										
0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.3
1- 2	3	75.0	5	62.5	31	35.2	46	28.8	49	57.6
3- 4	1	25.0	2	25.0	29	33.0	54	33.7	23	27.1
5- 6	0	0.0	0	0.0	15	17.1	39	24.3	5	5.9
7- 8	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	9.1	14	8.8	5	5.9
9-10	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.4	4	2.5	1	1.2
11-12	0	0.0	1	12.5	1	1.1	2	1.3	0	0.0
13-14	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	0.6	0	0.0
Total	4	100.0	8	100.0	88	100.0	160	100.0	85	100.0

(2) Three ethnic groups recorded high percentages indicating from zero to four siblings (American Indian/Alaskan Native, 90.0%; Asian/Pacific Islander, 87.5%; and Anglo, 84.7%). The remaining two groups, Black and Hispanic, reported having as few as one sibling to as many as 14 siblings. For these two groups, there was also a considerable spread in the pattern connecting the number of siblings.

D. Ethnicity-by-Gender Descriptors. When this sample of leavers is examined by ethnicity and by gender, several findings are worth noting.

(1) For all five ethnic groups, regardless of sex, the majority of leavers were 17, 18 or 19 year-olds (Table 12).

(2) Only the Hispanic group tended to have the largest percentage of leavers, male (43.7%) and female (42.5%), leave school during the 10th grade (Table 13).

(3) For all five ethnic groups, regardless of sex, the greatest number left officially from January through March, and in May (Table 13).

(4) The majority of subjects from all five ethnic groups tended to live with both parents or with their mothers (Table 14).

(5) In comparison with the four other ethnic groups, both male and female White subjects reported having parents with the greatest amount of formal education (Table 14).

(6) More Than 80% of American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and White leavers reported having between zero to four siblings. Only Black and Hispanic leavers did not display this pattern. Of Black males, 37% had from 5 to 14 siblings and 24.3% of Black females had from 5 to 14 siblings. The 5 to 14 range of siblings was true for 33.7% of the Hispanic males and 41.6% of the Hispanic females.

Table 12

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity and Gender
(Summarized Across Birthdate)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Birthdate																				
1961	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	00.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7	0	0.0
1962	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	00.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
1963	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	00.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	1	1.2	1	1.7	0	0.0
1964	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	00.0	2	3.6	2	5.3	7	8.0	2	2.5	7	12.1	2	5.2
1965	2	66.7	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	33.3	22	39.2	13	34.2	33	38.0	33	41.2	10	17.3	8	21.1
1966	1	33.3	1	50.0	2	40.0	1	33.3	20	35.7	12	31.6	27	31.0	20	25.0	25	43.1	17	44.7
1967	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	10	17.9	7	18.4	13	14.9	15	18.8	13	22.4	8	21.1
1968	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	4	10.5	6	6.9	9	11.3	1	1.7	3	7.9
Total	3	100.0	2	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	56	100.0	38	100.0	87	100.0	80	100.0	58	100.0	38	100.0

Table 13

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity and Gender
(Summarized Across Last Enrolled Grade and Last Enrollment Date)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Last Enrolled Date																				
10th	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	20.0	0	00.0	14	25.0	10	26.3	38	43.7	34	42.5	11	19.0	9	23.7
1th	3	100.0	0	00.0	1	20.0	2	66.7	21	37.5	12	31.6	27	31.0	26	32.5	21	36.2	12	31.6
12th	0	0.0	1	50.0	3	60.0	1	33.3	21	37.5	16	42.1	22	25.3	20	25.0	26	44.8	17	44.7
Total	3	100.0	2	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	56	100.0	38	100.0	87	100.0	80	100.0	58	100.0	38	100.0
Last Enrollment Date (Academic Year 1983-84)																				
1983 - September	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	13.2	1	1.1	3	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
1983 - October	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	8	14.3	2	5.3	12	13.8	9	11.2	2	3.4	0	0.0
1983 - November	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	5	8.9	1	2.6	10	11.5	10	12.5	3	5.2	3	7.9
1983 - December	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.9	1	2.6	9	10.4	3	3.7	4	6.9	4	10.5
1984 - January	1	33.3	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	33.3	11	19.6	2	5.3	15	17.2	19	23.8	11	19.0	12	31.6
1984 - February	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	7	12.5	8	21.1	6	6.9	4	5.0	13	22.4	3	7.9
1984 - March	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	10	17.9	4	10.5	9	10.4	8	10.0	7	12.1	4	10.5
1984 - April	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.3	4	10.5	7	8.0	7	8.8	4	6.9	4	10.5
1984 - May	0	0.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	8	14.3	7	18.4	12	13.8	12	15.0	9	15.5	3	7.9
1984 - June	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.3	4	10.5	6	6.9	5	6.3	5	8.6	5	13.2
Total	3	100.0	2	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	56	100.0	38	100.0	87	100.0	80	100.0	58	100.0	38	100.0

Table 14

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity and Gender
(Summarized Across Resident Adult, Level of Parent Education and Number of Siblings)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Resident Adult For Leaver																				
Both parents	1	50.0	1	50.0	4	80.0	2	66.7	18	32.1	16	42.1	43	50.0	41	51.9	22	39.3	15	39.5
Mother	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	24	42.9	18	47.4	28	32.6	23	29.1	25	44.6	15	39.5
Father	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	7.1	1	2.6	2	2.3	0	0.0	5	8.9	2	5.3
Grandparent(s)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	1	2.6	3	3.5	1	1.3	1	1.8	1	2.6
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	33.3	9	16.1	2	5.3	10	11.6	14	17.7	3	5.4	5	13.2
Total	2	100.0	2	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	56	100.0	38	100.0	86	100.0	79	100.0	56	100.0	38	100.0
Parent Education																				
Father:																				
K-12 years	2	100.0	1	100.0	4	80.0	1	33.3	37	82.2	28	87.5	65	100.0	57	98.3	26	63.4	19	65.5
13-16 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	66.7	6	13.3	4	12.5	0	0.0	1	1.7	12	29.3	9	31.0
17-18 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	4.9	0	0.0
19-20 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.4	1	3.4
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	45	100.0	32	100.0	65	100.0	58	100.0	41	100.0	29	100.0
Mother:																				
K-12 years	2	100.0	2	100.0	4	80.0	1	33.3	50	89.3	33	86.8	80	98.8	75	100.0	33	63.5	24	66.7
13-16 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	66.7	6	10.7	5	13.2	1	1.2	0	0.0	16	30.8	12	33.3
17-18 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.8	0	0.0
19-20 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	2	100.0	2	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	56	100.0	38	100.0	81	100.0	75	100.0	52	100.0	36	100.0

Table 14 (Continued)

Leaver Sample by Ethnicity and Gender
(Summarized Across Resident Adult, Level of Parent Education and Number of Siblings)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Number of Siblings																				
0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.7
1- 2	1	50.0	2	100.0	3	60.0	2	33.3	20	39.2	11	29.7	24	28.9	22	28.6	30	60.0	19	54.3
3- 4	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	0.0	12	23.5	17	46.0	31	37.4	23	29.8	14	28.0	9	25.7
5- 6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	21.6	4	10.8	20	24.1	19	24.7	3	6.0	2	5.7
7- 8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	9.8	3	8.1	5	6.0	9	11.7	3	6.0	2	5.7
9-10	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.9	1	2.7	2	2.4	2	2.6	0	0.0	1	2.9
11-12	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.7	1	1.2	1	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
13-14	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	2	100.0	2	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	51	100.0	37	100.0	83	100.0	77	100.0	50	100.0	35	100.0

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Presented in this section of the report is the methodology used to investigate the early school leavers. Described first is the research staff responsible for conducting the various phases of the study. Next, is a step-by-step description of the procedure and data collection instruments designed to obtain information from the student participants.

Research Staff

Eight Pupil Services and Attendance (PSA) workers and eight relief clerks served as the research staff for this investigation. The PSA personnel selected by the Director of Student Adjustment Services, were all full-time district employees during the regular academic year. On the other hand, the the eight relief clerks were hired by the District specifically for this study, although some had previously been part-time employees of the District. Included in the PSA and relief clerk groups were persons who spoke both English and Spanish.

The entire research staff participated in a 10-day training series designed to familiarize them with the study's purposes, design, implementation, data collection, and data preparation stages. In addition, because the training was both didactic (i.e., focused on specific content areas) and experiential, the staff members were required to perform certain behaviors and activities designed to (a) expose them to their assigned tasks; (b) provide them with hands-on experience in completing the data collection instruments; (c) teach them the skills of interpersonal interviewing;

and; (d) establish procedures for the reporting and synthesizing of data gathered during the implementation of the study.

Procedure

The actual investigation consisted of four phases, each conceived to (a) employ the relief clerks and PSA counselors; (b) make use of certain school resource data for contacting students, e.g., school cumulative files, emergency cards, registration cards; (c) specify particular leaver-staff contact procedures for telephone interviews and person-to-person interviews; and (d) utilize definite locations for the procurement of leaver data, by home visits or telephone calls. A detailed description of the procedures characterizing each phase follows.

Phase 1. The relief clerks and PSA counselors worked together at each school site. The first responsibility of the clerks was to gather from available school sources, e.g., cumulative files, all information needed to complete the early school leavers' Cumulative Record Summary Forms. (See Appendix 2.) The relief clerks' second responsibility was to telephone the homes of the early school leavers to schedule appointments for home interviews. These interviews were conducted by the PSA counselors.

More specifically, the task of the relief clerks at each school was to telephone 60 randomly selected early school leavers. The former students' names were selected from those appearing on the District's Record of Transfer forms. The telephone numbers were obtained from available school records. During the telephone contacts, the relief clerks informed the leavers, or their parents or guardians, about the purpose of the study,

the responses to be solicited from the participants, the confidential issues associated with the study, and the total time required to complete the interview. Following this briefing, the relief clerks attempted to schedule a date and time for the PSA counselors to make home visits to those leavers volunteering to participate in the study. (See Appendix 3 for copy of "Agreement to be Interviewed by Counselor" form.)

The relief clerks performed all of their duties at the 12 target high schools between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. The counselors conducted their leaver interviews during both day and night hours, depending on the availability of the early school leavers.

In summary, during Phase 1 the relief clerks scheduled leaver interviews for the PSA counselors; contacts were made with the early school leavers using available school records; the interviews were designed to be person-to-person (i.e., PSA counselor and leaver); and, the leavers' homes were the location sites for the scheduled interviews.

Phase 2. During this phase the PSA counselors completed all of the tasks that the relief clerks accomplished during Phase 1. That is, the PSA staff selected leavers from the Record of Transfer forms, and using available telephone numbers, made appointments for their (the PSA counselors) home interviews. As the counselors telephoned leavers to schedule appointments, the relief clerks continued to gather information needed to complete the Cumulative Record Data Summary forms. Hence, it was the duty of the PSA counselors to schedule leaver interviews and the duty of the relief clerks to gather pertinent leaver demographic information. The primary source from which leaver contacts were made continued to be telephone numbers

obtained from available school records; the interviews continued to be person-to-person; and the location for the interviews remained at the home of the leavers.

Phase 3. This phase was characterized by the presence of only one staffing group, the PSA counselors. The relief clerks no longer worked on any aspect of the project. The services of the relief clerks were terminated at the conclusion of Phase 2.

During this phase the PSA counselors completed three tasks: First, to telephone the leavers using available school records; second, to give the briefing previously described to leavers or their parents/guardians; and, third, to conduct leaver interviews by telephone.

The distinguishing feature of Phase 3, was that leaver-staff contact occurred by telephone communication rather than by person-to-person contacts.

Phase 4. Once again only the PSA counselors were involved with the project. It was during this phase that the Record of Transfer forms were no longer used as the primary source for contacting leavers. Instead, the counselors obtained addresses from whatever sources were available. They then attempted to locate the early school leavers with a personal visit to the home or the neighborhood where the leaver was thought to reside. Once contact was made, the interviews were usually completed in the leavers' homes.

To recapitulate, in Phase 4, the PSA counselors alone implemented the study. What is significant about this phase is that the PSA counselors used the available addresses only as a starting point for locating leavers. In some cases, the addresses led only to a particular neighborhood. The PSA counselors then took the initiative to make the necessary inquiries and to use whatever information they could gather to facilitate locating the early school leavers.

Instruments

Several instruments were developed for use in this study. The first, the Cumulative Record Data Summary form, was designed to obtain demographic information about the early school leavers. This form solicited from the respondent information such as residence, birthdate, ethnicity, grade placement when leaving high school, and the month of the academic year last attended. A second instrument, the Student Interview, was developed to gather information about the leavers' (a) dropout history, (b) reasons for leaving high school, (c) feelings about various aspects of the high school experience, (d) past and present activities, (e) academic and general future plans, (f) reflections about their high schools, and (g) recommendations for the improvement of high schools. (See Appendix 3 for copy of Student Interview.) A third instrument was the Completion Check Sheet on which leavers' appointments were noted, as well as other indicators that a case was completed. (Copy of Completion Check Sheet is presented in Appendix 5.) Lastly, there was an informal consent form developed. In addition to

these instruments, the relief clerks and PSA counselors developed a daily telephone log to monitor home calls and a summary telephone log sheet to report the number of calls made daily, what percentage of calls resulted in leaver appointments, the number of contacts made to reach a particular leaver before the finalization of an appointment, and other miscellaneous comments regarding the telephone conversation with leavers and their parents or guardians.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

This chapter describes the results obtained from the 374 early school leavers who served as the basis for this investigation. The discussion of the results is organized into seven sections. Each represents the foci used to gather knowledge about the early school leavers. Specifically, the seven foci concerning the early school leavers were:

1. report of dropout history
2. reasons for leaving high school
3. feelings about various aspects of high school experience
4. activities (past and present)
5. future plans (academic and general)
6. reflections about their high schools
7. recommendations for improvement of high schools

Report of Dropout History

In order to obtain perceptions regarding their dropout history, the early leavers were requested to provide (a) the last grade they attended at their respective high schools, (b) the portion of the academic year completed, i.e., complete or partial year, and (c) the month and year of their last attendance date.

The data presented in Table 15 indicate a slight trend among the total sample of school leavers. As the students moved through grades 10, 11, and 12, the dropout rate increased.

Table 15

Last Enrolled Grade and Last Enrollment Date Reported by Total Leaver Sample

Item	Leaver N	Leaver %
Last Enrolled Grade		
10th	106	28.8
11th	117	31.8
12th	145	39.4
Total	368	100.0
Last Enrollment Date (Academic Year 1983-84)		
1983 - September	22	6.1
1983 - October	22	6.1
1983 - November	48	13.1
1983 - December	36	9.8
1984 - January	60	16.4
1984 - February	50	13.6
1984 - March	29	7.9
1984 - April	36	9.8
1984 - May	32	8.7
1984 - June	31	8.5
Total	366	100.0

Note. Data taken from leaver interviews.

Another finding showed that very few of the early school leavers completed full academic years and then dropped out or just did not return to school. Rather, the almost universal behavior was completion of only a portion of the academic year, since 99.2% of the leavers (N= 342) reported that their exit was made during the time they were enrolled and attending school. From the data shown in Table 15, it is again clear that the early school leavers' left school in greatest numbers during the early months of the calendar year. January (16.4%) and February (13.6%) were the most active months; however, November (13.1%) was close behind.

The District's records showing when students were last enrolled (Table 4) and the leavers' report of date last enrolled (Table 15) are not consistent. However, this discrepancy occurs because the leaver knew when he or she actually left school, while the District continued to carry the student until there was some verification that the student had actually left school.

Reasons for Leaving High School

As previously mentioned, the interviews were designed to provide both a quantitative and qualitative description of early school leavers. The responses were analyzed by (a) calculating the number and percentage for the yes-no and agree-disagree items, (b) summarizing all responses to the open-ended items, and (c) recording whatever comments were made. The data presented in Table 16 summarize the responses of the early school leavers who were interviewed. In general, the leavers' responses to the items in this section indicated that they rejected a greater number of the reasons given for leaving (i.e., higher percentages of "no" responses) than accepted them (i.e., low percentages of "yes" responses). The percentages of "no" responses ranged from a high of 98.4% to a low of 60.1%; the "yes"

Table 16

Reasons Given by Leaver Sample
for Leaving School Early

Reasons	Response			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Transportation	37	10.0	334	90.0
Poor Grades	148	39.9	223	60.1
Marriage	10	2.7	358	97.3
Financial Difficulties	78	21.0	293	79.0
Teacher Problems	90	24.3	280	75.7
Health	53	14.3	318	85.7
Suspension or Expulsion	42	11.3	329	88.7
Students at the School	74	20.0	296	80.0
Hostile School	41	11.1	329	88.9
Family Reasons	145	39.1	226	60.9
School Behavior	62	16.8	308	83.2
18 years or older	123	33.2	247	66.8
Juvenile Court Placement	6	1.6	364	98.4
Work Responsibilities	110	29.8	259	70.2
Other	30	22.6	103	77.4

responses from 39.9% to 1.6%. It would, thus, appear that the early school leavers are clearer about the reasons that were not important in their decision to leave school.

When the specific items are examined, it is obvious that (a) poor grades (39.9%), (b) family reasons (39.1%), (c) 18 years or more (33.2%), (d) work responsibilities (29.8%), and (e) teacher problems (24.3%) were the most popular reasons for deciding to leave school before graduating. In contrast, (a) juvenile court placement (98.4%), (b) marriage (97.3%), (c) transportation (90.0%), and (d) hostile school (88.9%) were most often cited as "no" responses, not important in deciding to leave.

Comments were recorded by the interviewers when leavers' were directly asked, "Why did you leave high school before graduating?" The information obtained during these one-to-one contacts confirmed the quantitative data presented in Table 16 and, at the same time, provided a qualitative dimension that substantially strengthened the knowledge about why students leave school before graduating. The leavers' open-ended comments were primarily related to school. By far, the most frequently cited reason was that the leavers felt school was boring. The second most cited reason was that the leavers were behind on credits, and therefore could not graduate.

School related problems that were frequently mentioned by the early school leavers dealt with teacher problems ("Teacher graded unfairly. Gave me C's and D's. I did my work. Members of sports teams got higher grades with the work."), matter of truancy and lack of attendance ("Left to go to Mexico to get away from problems -- school, girlfriend, gang, home"), and removal because being over 18 years old ("Mrs. _, teacher in Attendance Office, said I couldn't go back to school another semester because I was 19").

The leavers' reasons for early school departure were not confined to academic matters. The most frequently mentioned reason for leaving school before graduation, school related and otherwise, involved work responsibilities. Illustrative of this point is the comment one leaver offered: "I must work to support my kid." Two other personal reasons were also frequently mentioned -- home responsibilities and pregnancy/baby care. Examples are, "I must work to help support my family" and "Girlfriend had a baby and I had to get a job."

Other reasons given to the open-ended question, "Why did you leave high school before graduation?" include kicked out, sick, couldn't communicate with counselors, and discipline problem.

As previously noted, an important focus of this study was to ascertain "why" early school leavers exit prematurely. While the original analysis looked at this issue for the total sample, information was also needed as it relates to ethnicity and gender. (For the American Indian/Alaskan Native and Asian/Pacific Islander groups caution must be taken with the findings because of the very small numbers.) These summary data are presented in Table 17. It is interesting to note that, across all five ethnic groups, it was (a) poor grades, (b) family reasons, (c) 18 years or more, and (d) work responsibilities that most often emerged as reasons for leaving school early. The number one reasons, i.e., the reason having the highest percentage, for each ethnic group follows:

Ethnic Group	Number One Reason
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Poor grades (100.0%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	Poor grades (62.5%)

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Table 17

Leaver Sample Reasons for Leaving School by Gender and Ethnicity
(N = 370)

Reasons for Leaving School	American Indian/Alaskan Native (N = 5)								Asian/Pacific Islander (N = 8)							
	Male (N = 3)				Female (N = 2)				Male (N = 5)				Female (N = 3)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Transportation problems	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Poor grades	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	2	66.7	1	33.3
Marriage	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Financial difficulties	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	2	40.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Teacher problems	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	2	66.7	1	33.3
Health	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Suspension	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	2	40.0	3	60.0	1	33.3	2	66.7
Students at the school	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Hostile school	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	1	33.3	2	66.7
Family reasons	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	3	60.0	2	66.7	1	33.3
School behavior	1	50.0	1	50.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	4	80.0	2	66.7	1	33.3
18 years or more	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Juvenile court placement	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
Work responsibilities	0	0.0	2	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	3	60.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	3	100.0

Reasons for Leaving School	Total %	
	Yes	No
Transportation problems	12.5	87.5
Poor grades	62.5	37.5
Marriage	0.0	100.0
Financial difficulties	25.0	75.0
Teacher problems	31.5	62.5
Health	0.0	100.0
Suspension	37.5	62.5
Students at the school	0.0	100.0
Hostile school	25.0	75.0
Family reasons	50.0	50.0
School behavior	37.5	62.5
18 years or more	37.5	62.5
Juvenile court placement	0.0	100.0
Work responsibilities	37.5	62.5

Table 17 (Continued)

Leaver Sample Reasons for Leaving School by Gender and Ethnicity
(N = 370)

Reasons for Leaving School	Black (N = 94)										Hispanic (N = 167)									
	Male (N = 56)				Female (N = 38)				Total %		Male (N = 87)				Female (N = 80)				Total %	
	Yes		No		Yes		No				Yes		No		Yes		No			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Yes	No	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Yes	No
Transportation problems	3	5.6	51	94.4	3	7.9	35	92.1	6.5	93.5	10	11.8	75	88.2	6	7.6	73	92.4	9.8	90.2
Poor grades	11	20.4	43	79.6	14	36.8	24	63.2	27.2	72.8	40	47.1	45	52.9	36	45.6	43	54.4	46.3	53.7
Marriage	0	0.0	54	100.0	0	0.0	38	100.0	0.0	100.0	4	4.7	81	95.3	6	7.8	71	92.2	6.2	93.8
Financial difficulties	10	18.5	44	81.5	5	13.2	33	86.8	16.3	83.7	26	30.6	59	69.4	19	24.1	60	75.9	27.4	72.6
Teacher problems	13	24.1	41	75.9	14	36.8	24	63.2	29.4	70.6	17	20.0	68	80.0	10	12.8	68	87.2	16.6	83.4
Health	3	5.6	51	94.4	6	15.8	32	84.2	9.8	90.2	13	15.3	72	84.7	18	22.8	61	77.2	18.9	81.1
Suspension	8	14.2	46	85.2	3	9.9	35	92.1	12.0	88.0	13	15.3	72	84.7	3	3.8	76	96.2	9.8	90.2
Students at the school	9	16.7	45	83.3	8	21.1	30	78.9	18.5	81.5	21	24.7	64	75.3	12	15.2	67	84.8	20.1	79.9
Hostile school	7	13.2	46	86.8	7	18.4	31	81.6	15.4	84.6	5	5.9	80	94.1	5	6.3	74	93.7	6.1	93.9
Family reasons	22	40.1	32	59.2	13	34.2	25	65.8	38.0	62.0	31	36.5	54	63.5	40	50.6	39	49.4	43.3	56.7
School behavior	8	14.8	46	85.2	11	29.0	27	71.0	20.7	79.3	18	21.1	67	78.8	4	5.1	70	94.9	13.6	86.5
18 years or more	14	26.4	39	73.6	14	36.8	24	63.2	30.8	69.2	39	45.9	46	54.1	20	25.3	59	74.7	36.0	64.0
Juvenile court placement	3	5.7	50	94.3	0	0.0	38	100.0	3.3	96.7	1	1.2	84	98.2	1	1.3	78	78.7	1.2	98.8
Work responsibilities	13	24.5	40	75.5	8	21.1	30	78.9	23.1	76.9	38	44.7	42	55.3	19	24.1	60	75.9	34.8	65.2

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Table 17 (Continued)

Leaver Sample Reasons for Leaving School by Gender and Ethnicity
(N = 370)

Reasons for Leaving School	White (N = 96)									
	Male (N = 58)				Female (N = 38)				Total %	
	Yes		No		Yes		No			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Yes	No
Transportation problems	7	12.1	51	87.9	5	13.5	32	86.5	12.6	87.4
Poor grades	27	46.6	31	53.4	15	40.5	22	59.5	44.2	55.8
Marriage	0	0.0	58	100.0	0	0.0	36	100.0	0.0	100.0
Financial difficulties	8	13.8	50	86.2	7	18.9	30	80.1	15.8	84.2
Teacher problems	17	29.3	41	20.7	13	35.1	24	64.9	31.6	68.4
Health	8	13.8	50	86.2	4	10.8	33	89.2	12.6	87.3
Suspension	7	12.1	51	87.9	4	10.8	33	89.2	11.6	88.4
Students at the school	10	17.2	48	82.8	12	32.4	25	67.6	23.2	76.8
Hostile school	7	12.1	51	87.9	7	18.9	30	81.1	14.7	85.3
Family reasons	15	25.7	43	74.1	13	35.1	24	64.9	29.5	70.5
School behavior	11	19.0	47	81.0	4	10.8	33	89.2	15.8	84.2
18 years or more	19	32.8	39	67.2	10	27.0	27	73.0	30.5	69.5
Juvenile court placement	0	0.0	58	100.0	0	0.0	37	100.0	0.0	100.0
Work responsibilities	16	28.1	41	71.9	9	24.3	28	75.7	26.6	73.4

Black	Family reasons (38.0%)
Hispanic	Poor grades (46.3%)
White	Poor grades (43.8%)

There was also some interest in ascertaining whether within each ethnic group, differences exist between the two sexes with regard to the reasons for leaving school early. Notable differences were:

Poor Grades:

1. American Indian/Alaskan Native - male (100%) -- female (0.0%)
2. Asian/Pacific Islander - female (66.7%) -- male (20.0%)

Family Reasons:

1. Asian/Pacific Islander -- female (66.7%) -- male (40.0%)
2. Hispanic - female (50.6%) -- male (36.5%)

School Behavior:

1. Asian/Pacific Islander - female (66.7%) -- male (20.0%)
2. Hispanic - male (21.1%) -- female (5.1%)

Work Responsibilities:

Hispanic - male (44.7%) -- female (24.1%)

Feelings about Aspects of High School Experience

A procedure employing Likert-type self-report items was used to determine the early school leavers' feelings about their school experiences and their educational values. Consonant with Likert-type inventories, the statements were presented in both positive and negative forms.

Presented in Table 18 are the early leavers' responses according to the degree of agreement/disagreement registered for 12 statements. An analysis of this table indicates that, in general, the leavers in this sample held extremely positive attitudes about learning, education, and the high school

Table 18

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School
School Experience, and Educational Values

Item	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Undecided		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
My expectations about school were too high.	23	6.2	201	54.2	42	11.3	84	22.6	21	5.7
I felt lonely when I was in high school.	67	18.0	221	59.2	9	2.4	66	17.7	10	2.7
The teachers at my high school were open to me.	19	5.1	77	20.8	40	10.8	213	57.6	21	5.7
I believe education plays a meaningful role in shaping my life.	5	1.3	18	4.8	12	3.2	250	67.2	87	23.4
If I wished to speak to my high school principal, I felt comfortable in doing so.	22	5.9	114	30.6	47	12.6	174	46.8	15	4.0
I believed it was important to work for good grades in high school.	0	0.0	15	4.0	15	4.0	286	77.1	55	14.8
My high school encouraged; its students to be active in school affairs and activities.	7	1.9	49	13.2	33	8.9	254	68.3	29	7.8
I believe it was important to graduate from high school and receive my high school diploma.	2	0.5	15	4.0	5	1.3	251	67.5	99	26.6
If I wanted to talk with my counselor, I was sure that the counselor would speak with me.	11	3.0	44	11.8	19	5.1	245	65.9	53	14.2
My interest in school was absent by the time I reached high school.	43	11.6	188	50.7	24	6.5	110	29.6	6	1.6
I believe learning is important.	0	0.0	2	0.5	1	0.3	271	72.8	98	26.3
I was smart enough and possessed the necessary abilities to graduate from high school.	0	0.0	38	10.3	36	9.8	216	58.5	79	21.4

diploma. Almost the entire sample (99.1%) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the item, "I believe learning is important" while over 90% similarly rated:

- o "I believe education plays a meaningful role in my life" (90.6%)
- o "I believed it was important to work for good grades in high school" (91.9%)
- o "I believe it was important to graduate from high school and receive my high school diploma (94.1%)

Other statements elicited some response variance from the leavers. Two such items were related to school personnel. For example, in response to the statement, "The teachers at my high school were open to me," there was 25.9% disagreement, 10.8% undecided, and 63% agreement among the early leavers sample. Likewise, the statement, "If I wished to speak to my high school principal, I felt comfortable in doing so," there were 36.5% "disagree" responses, 12.6% "undecided" responses, and 50.8% "agree" responses. There were also some leavers who believed their "expectations about school were too high" (28.3%) and those who felt their "interest in school was absent by the time they reached high school" (31.2%).

Another area of concern was the issue of ethnicity and gender as related to school experiences and educational values. Several findings in Table 19 are worth noting. First, there appeared to be a consistent pattern of agreement between the sexes for all ethnic groups except the Asian/Pacific Islander and Black groups. In general, the males in these groups tended to be more varied in their agree/disagree responses than were the females. For example, in response to the item, "I felt lonely when I was in high school," 100% of the Asian/Pacific Islander females responded "disagree." Yet, 20% of the males from this group responded "strongly disagree," 20% "disagree," 40% "agree," and 20% "strongly agree." This pattern held true for the Asian/Pacific Islander group for all 12 statements. Gender differences

Table 19

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School Experience and Educational Values
by Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Items	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
My expectations about school school were too high.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	20.0	6	15.8	1	1.2	1	1.3	3	5.2	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	3	100.0	30	54.6	21	55.3	44	52.4	47	59.5	31	53.5	19	51.4
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	3	5.4	1	2.6	11	13.1	9	11.4	10	17.2	4	10.8
Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	9	16.4	6	15.8	25	29.7	19	24.0	10	17.2	10	27.0
Strongly Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	4	10.5	3	3.6	3	8.8	4	6.9	4	10.8
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	84	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0
I felt lonely when I was in high school.																				
Strongly Disagree	1	50.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	15	27.3	11	28.9	11	12.8	9	11.4	15	25.9	3	8.1
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	3	100.0	35	63.6	18	47.4	54	62.8	46	58.2	32	55.2	26	70.3
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	2	2.3	3	3.8	2	3.4	0	0.0
Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	7	18.4	17	19.8	18	22.8	8	13.8	7	18.9
Strongly Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.3	2	2.3	3	3.8	1	1.7	1	2.7
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	86	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0

Table 19 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School Experience and Educational Values
by Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Items	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The teachers at my high school were open to me.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	3	8.1	1	1.2	2	2.6	5	8.6	3	8.1
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	8	14.5	10	27.0	14	16.5	16	20.5	10	17.2	14	37.8
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.7	2	3.6	5	13.5	10	11.7	10	12.8	7	12.1	2	5.4
Agree	1	50.0	1	100.0	2	40.0	1	33.3	37	67.3	19	51.4	55	64.7	45	57.7	32	55.2	16	43.2
Strongly Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	0	0.0	5	5.9	5	6.4	4	6.9	2	5.4
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	37	100.0	85	100.0	78	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0
I believe education plays a meaningful role in shaping my life.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	1	1.2	1	1.3	1	1.7	1	2.7
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	0	0.0	2	2.3	4	5.1	8	13.8	2	5.4
Undecided	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	1	2.6	3	3.5	2	2.5	3	5.2	1	2.7
Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	4	80.0	3	100.0	33	60.0	25	65.8	64	75.3	56	70.9	31	53.5	26	70.3
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	17	30.9	12	31.6	15	17.7	16	20.2	15	25.8	7	18.9
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0

Table 19 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School Experience and Educational Values
by Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Items	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 7)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
If I wished to speak to my school principal, I felt comfortable in doing so.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	4	10.5	3	3.5	3	3.8	5	8.6	4	10.8
Disagree	1	50.0	1	100.0	2	40.0	2	66.7	8	14.6	9	23.7	24	28.2	22	27.9	21	41.4	16	43.2
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	10	18.2	8	21.1	8	9.4	8	10.1	8	13.8	4	10.8
Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	33.3	35	63.6	13	34.2	46	54.1	44	55.7	17	29.3	13	35.1
Strongly Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	4	10.5	4	4.7	2	2.5	4	6.9	0	0.0
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0
I believed it was important to work for good grades in high school.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	2	2.4	2	2.5	8	13.8	2	5.6
Undecided	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	2.6	3	3.5	1	1.3	3	5.2	5	13.9
Agree	2	100.0	1	100.0	4	80.0	1	33.7	43	78.2	28	73.7	71	83.5	63	79.7	41	70.7	25	69.4
Strongly Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	11	20.0	9	23.7	9	10.6	13	16.5	6	10.3	4	11.1
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	36	100.0

Table 19 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School Experience and Educational Values
by Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
My high school encouraged its students to be active in school affairs and activities.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	3	7.9	0	0.0	1	1.3	2	3.4	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	6	10.9	4	10.5	6	7.1	12	15.2	8	13.8	10	27.0
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	8	14.6	4	10.5	4	4.7	5	6.3	7	12.1	3	8.1
Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	80.0	2	66.7	34	61.8	24	63.2	71	83.5	57	72.1	33	56.9	22	59.5
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	10.9	3	7.9	4	4.7	4	5.1	8	13.8	2	5.4
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0
I believe it is important to graduate from high school and receive my high school diploma.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.7	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.6	1	1.2	2	2.5	10	17.2	1	2.7
Undecided	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	0	0.0	1	1.2	1	1.3	1	1.7	0	0.0
Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	3	60.0	3	100.0	38	69.1	23	60.5	64	75.3	52	65.8	32	55.2	28	75.7
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	16	29.1	14	36.8	19	22.3	24	30.4	14	24.1	8	21.6
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0

Table 19 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School Experience and Educational Values
by Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
If I wanted to talk with my high school counselor, I was sure that the counselor would speak with me.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	3	7.9	0	0.0	2	2.5	2	3.5	3	8.1
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	7.3	5	13.2	9	10.6	9	11.4	9	15.5	5	13.5
Undecided	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	3	5.4	3	7.9	3	3.5	3	3.8	5	8.6	1	2.7
Agree	1	50.0	1	100.0	4	80.0	1	33.3	40	72.7	23	60.5	61	71.8	55	69.6	34	31.8	21	56.8
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	8	14.6	4	10.5	12	14.1	10	12.7	8	3.5	7	18.9
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	99.9	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0
My interest in school was absent by the time I reached high school.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	16	29.1	7	18.4	4	4.8	8	10.1	6	10.3	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	2	66.7	26	47.3	17	44.7	48	57.1	42	53.2	27	46.6	20	54.1
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	40.0	1	33.3	1	1.8	3	7.9	4	4.8	4	5.1	5	8.6	4	10.1
Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	20.0	0	0.0	12	21.8	10	26.3	26	30.9	25	31.6	18	31.0	13	35.1
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.6	2	2.4	0	0.0	2	3.5	0	0.0
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	84	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0

Table 19 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Feelings About School Experience and Educational Values
by Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I believe learning is important.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.5	0	0.0
Undecided	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Agree	1	50.0	0	0.0	3	60.0	2	66.7	39	70.9	27	71.0	69	81.2	57	72.1	39	67.2	28	75.7
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	1	100.0	2	40.0	1	33.3	16	29.1	11	29.0	15	17.6	22	27.9	17	29.3	9	24.3
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	85	100.0	79	100.0	58	100.0	37	100.0
I was smart enough and possessed the necessary abilities to graduate from high school.																				
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	3	6.5	4	10.5	13	15.5	8	10.3	5	8.8	3	8.1
Undecided	1	50.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	5	13.2	8	9.5	13	16.7	3	5.3	3	8.1
Agree	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	33.3	29	52.7	21	55.3	52	61.9	48	61.5	32	56.1	23	62.2
Strongly Agree	1	50.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	2	66.7	21	38.2	8	21.0	11	13.1	9	11.5	17	29.8	8	21.6
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	84	100.0	78	100.0	57	100.0	37	100.0

also occurred with the Black early school leavers. The differences were expressed in response to two statements. To the first, "If I wished to speak to my school principal, I felt comfortable in doing so," disagreement was voiced by only 16.4% of the Black males but 34.2% of the Black females. Conversely, 65.4% of the Black males agreed with the statement, while only 44.7% of the females agreed. The second item where gender differences were found to exist was the Black leaver responses to the item, "If I wanted to talk with my high school counselor, I was sure that the counselor would speak with me." In this instance, there was 7.3% Black male disagreement and 21.1% Black female disagreement. At the same time 87.3% of the Black males gave "agree" responses, while 71% of the females gave "agree" responses.

Looking at the same data across ethnic groups, one finding is apparent. The response pattern was consistent across the ethnic groups with one exception, among the White leavers. Departures in general response trends were noted in three areas. In all three, the White leavers expressed more disagreement than did their counterparts from the four remaining ethnic groups. The three items were:

1. "I believe education plays a meaningful role in shaping my life."
2. "If I wished to speak to my school principal, I felt comfortable doing so."
3. "I believe it is important to graduate from high school and receive my high school diploma."

While the early school leavers expressed varied feelings about their school experiences and the value of education, their responses reflected high agreement when directly asked, "Would you recommend to your friends or relatives that they leave school before graduating?" Only 1.6% (N= 6) of the leaver sample responded in the affirmative while 84.4% (N= 314) responded in the negative and 14.0% (N= 52) offered "maybe" responses.

The data displayed in Table 20 indicate this pattern held true across ethnic groups and between sexes.

Comments given by the early school leavers to explain their recommendations to friends and relatives about graduation were in three areas. First, and most frequently cited, was the need for the diploma for employment purposes. One leaver commented, "Because you need a diploma to get a better job." Another stated, "You need basic skills and the diploma to get a good job."

A second classification for the responses dealt with the need to graduate "to make it in life." The comment given was, "You need the diploma to get anywhere in life." Third, some responses acknowledged the relationship between the diploma and individual competence. For example, one leaver remarked, "You need to learn and to graduate to show the world you're an OK person."

Other unsolicited spontaneous comments regarding the recommendation for friends and relatives emerged during the student interviews. These comments were:

- "You have to get the diploma to make it in life and to get a job. Once you get that you can do whatever you want in life."
- "I made a mistake, but I really want to graduate because it's very important to your (my) future."
- "You need a high school diploma to make it in this world. That's why I'm returning."
- "Education is very important for employment, attending the university and to be in the upper middle class or to be successful."
- "It's important to graduate. Because one doesn't, it doesn't mean that one should. It's up to the individual."
- "Missed out on a lot of stuff."

Table 20

Leaver Sample Recommendations About Graduation
According to Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Item	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Would you recommend to your friends or relatives that they leave school before graduating?																				
Yes	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	1	2.6	2	2.3	0	0.0	2	3.5	0	0.0
No	2	100.0	0	0.0	4	80.0	2	66.7	48	87.3	29	76.3	74	86.1	70	88.6	44	77.2	32	86.5
Maybe	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	20.0	1	33.3	6	10.9	8	21.1	10	11.6	9	11.4	11	19.3	5	13.5
Total	2	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	55	100.0	38	100.0	86	100.0	79	100.0	57	100.0	37	100.0

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- "Depends on their responsibilities."
- "Dropping out is not worth it. All your friends will graduate and you'll feel bad."
- "It's a stupid thing to do."
- "If you get pregnant, you should leave. Avoid unnecessary unpleasant events."
- "It's a lot easier to be in school than to be out working."
- "If they are doing OK they should stay and finish. But if they have something more important to do, they should do that."
- "Sometimes you have to do things differently and if you have to work sometimes you can't go to school too."
- "Even if you have to work you should not quit school because then it is too hard to get back into day school."
- "Because it's harder to find a job, and I really regret it now. I wish I had listened to my friends and parents who tried to encourage me to stay in school."

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Activities (Past and Present)

Because one primary goal of this investigation was to determine whether the early school leavers were truly dropouts from the educational system, it was necessary to ascertain what activities these youngsters have undertaken since leaving high school and to obtain information regarding their present activities. The data shown in Table 21 shed some light on the first activities undertaken since leaving high school. First, the majority of the leavers (N= 261, 70%) have sought employment. While less than half (40%) indicated they enrolled at other educational institutions or in the military. The same issue explored across ethnic and gender lines, disclosed the following findings (see Table 22):

1. Across all ethnic groups a higher percentage of females than males have enrolled in adult school.
2. For the Asian/Pacific Islander and White ethnic groups, more males than females have enrolled in regular school. More Black and

Table 21

Leaver Sample's Past Activity History

Past Activity	Response			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Enrolled in a technical school	41	11.3	321	88.7
Enrolled in an adult school	58	16.1	303	83.9
Entered military service	5	1.4	353	98.6
Sought employment	261	71.5	104	28.5
Entered into regular school	29	8.1	329	91.9
Enrolled in continuation school	19	5.4	334	94.6

Table 22

Leaver Sample's Past Activity History by
Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 378)

Response	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)		Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)		Black (N = 94)		Hispanic (N = 167)		White (N = 96)	
	Male (N = 3)	Female (N = 2)	Male (N = 5)	Female (N = 3)	Male (N = 56)	Female (N = 38)	Male (N = 87)	Female (N = 80)	Male (N = 58)	Female (N = 38)
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Activity since leaving school---										
Enrolled in technical school:										
Yes	1 50.0	0 0.0	1 25.0	0 0.0	11 20.4	4 10.8	10 12.2	3 3.9	6 10.7	4 11.1
No	1 50.0	1 100.0	3 75.0	3 100.0	43 79.6	33 89.2	72 87.8	75 96.1	50 89.3	32 88.9
Total	2 100.0	1 100.0	4 100.0	3 100.0	54 100.0	37 100.0	82 100.0	78 100.0	56 100.0	36 100.0
Enrolled in an adult school:										
Yes	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 25.0	1 33.3	9 16.7	6 16.7	15 18.3	15 19.2	5 8.9	6 16.7
No	2 100.0	1 100.0	3 75.0	2 66.7	45 83.3	30 83.3	67 81.7	63 80.8	51 91.1	30 83.3
Total	2 100.0	1 100.0	4 100.0	3 100.0	54 100.0	36 100.0	82 100.0	78 100.0	56 100.0	36 100.0
Entered military service:										
Yes	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 33.3	1 1.9	0 0.0	1 1.2	0 0.0	3 5.4	0 0.0
No	2 100.0	1 100.0	4 100.0	2 66.7	52 98.1	36 100.0	79 98.8	78 100.0	53 94.6	36 100.0
Total	2 100.0	1 100.0	4 100.0	3 100.0	53 100.0	36 100.0	80 100.0	78 100.0	56 100.0	36 100.0

Table 22 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Past Activity History by
Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 370)

Response	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)		Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)		Black (N = 94)		Hispanic (N = 167)		White (N = 96)	
	Male (N = 3)	Female (N = 2)	Male (N = 5)	Female (N = 3)	Male (N = 56)	Female (N = 38)	Male (N = 87)	Female (N = 80)	Male (N = 58)	Female (N = 38)
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Activity since leaving school---										
Sought employment:										
Yes	2 100.0	1 100.0	3 75.0	1 33.3	40 74.1	22 61.1	65 78.3	50 53.3	43 75.4	28 75.7
No	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 25.0	2 66.7	14 25.9	14 38.9	18 21.7	29 36.7	14 24.6	9 24.3
Total	2 100.0	1 100.0	4 100.0	3 100.0	54 100.0	36 100.0	83 100.0	79 100.0	57 100.0	37 100.0
Enrolled in regular school:										
Yes	0 0.0	0 0.0	2 66.7	0 0.0	3 5.7	3 8.3	3 3.7	9 11.5	6 10.7	1 2.9
No	2 100.0	1 100.0	1 33.3	3 100.0	50 94.3	33 91.7	79 96.3	69 88.5	50 89.3	34 97.1
Total	2 100.0	1 100.0	3 100.0	3 100.0	53 100.0	36 100.0	82 100.0	78 100.0	56 100.0	35 100.0
Enrolled in continuation school:										
Yes	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 25.0	0 0.0	2 3.9	2 5.6	6 7.5	3 3.9	3 5.5	2 5.9
No	2 100.0	1 100.0	3 75.0	3 100.0	50 96.1	34 94.4	74 92.5	74 96.1	52 94.5	32 94.1
Total	2 100.0	1 100.0	4 100.0	3 100.0	52 100.0	36 100.0	80 100.0	77 100.0	55 100.0	34 100.0

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Hispanic females have enrolled in regular school than have Black and Hispanic males.

3. More males than females in the Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic groups have enrolled in continuation school. For the Black and White ethnic groups, more females than males have enrolled in continuation schools.

4. The Asian/Pacific Islander and Black males have the highest percentage of enrollment for technical schools: the Asian/Pacific Islander female for adult school; and the Asian/Pacific Islander male for military service.

5. All ethnic groups and all sexes within these groups, with the exception of the Hispanic females, indicate a 74% or higher percentage rate for employment sought. The rate for the Hispanic female was 63.3%.

6. The White female showed the lowest percentage (2.9%) for enrollment in regular school.

7. The Hispanic male showed the highest percentage (7.5%) for continuation school enrollment.

Open-ended responses from the leavers produced some interesting results. First, a small number of leavers indicated they enrolled in junior colleges and private schools (e.g., beauty and acting school). What was surprising to learn was the large number of leavers who used the words "tried" or "plan to" in the responses made to the interviewers. For example, frequently heard remarks were, "I tried to enroll in regular school;" "I tried to enroll in continuation school;" "I plan to enroll in technical school in September;" and "I plan to enroll in LACC."

As previously noted, it was also of major concern that information be gathered regarding the early school leavers' present activity. Hence, in response to the open-ended question "At the present time, I am --------," the following feedback was received:

1. Nearly one-half (44.7%) of the sample were unemployed.

2. Approximately one-third (29.4%) were employed full-time.

3. Approximately one-fourth (21.7%) were employed part-time.

4. Less than 2% of the sample were in the military service; on probation, in Youth Authority placement, in court placement outside the home, on furlough; or, married.

As shown in Table 23, data analyzed by ethnicity and gender resulted in the following findings:

1. The Asian/Pacific Islander (50.5%) and White (38.5%) leavers have the two highest rates of full-time employment for this sample of early school leavers.

2. The Black (27.7%) and White (20.8%) leavers have the highest rates for part-time employment.

3. The Black (53.2%) and Hispanic (46.1%) leavers have the highest rates for unemployment.

4. Across all ethnic groups, except the Hispanics, females have higher percentages of full-time employment than do males. The reverse is true for the Hispanic group, i.e., a greater number of males are employed full-time than are females.

5. Across all ethnic groups, except the Hispanics, males have higher percentages of part-time employment than do females. The reverse is true for the Hispanic group, i.e., a greater number of females are employed part-time than are males.

6. Within the Hispanic and White groups, more females than males are unemployed. With the American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Black groups, more males than females are unemployed.

Future Plans (Academic and General)

An assessment was made of the early school leavers' future plans. The interviewers requested that the leavers respond to three open-ended questions.

The first was, "I want to return to school because -----." The majority of the early school leavers responded to this item with the response, "I want to get my diploma." This was clearly the most frequently mentioned reason. The second and third most popular comments were, "to further my education" and "I want to graduate." The designation of specific career goals (e.g., peace officer, lawyer, and engineer) was also mentioned by several leavers.

Table 23

Leaver Sample's Present Activity History by
Ethnicity and Across Gender
(N = 378)

Response	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Present Activity---																				
Employed full-time:	1	33.3	1	50.0	2	40.0	2	66.7	4	7.1	9	23.7	32	36.8	21	26.3	21	36.2	16	42.1
Percent total population			20.1				50.0				13.8				31.7				38.5	
Employed part-time:	0	0.0	1	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	18	32.1	8	21.1	13	14.9	19	23.8	14	24.1	6	15.8
Percent total population			0.0				12.5				27.7				19.2				20.8	
Not Employed:	1	33.3	0	0.0	2	40.0	1	33.3	31	55.4	18	47.4	37	42.5	38	47.5	17	29.3	13	34.2
Percent total population			20.0				37.5				53.2				46.1				31.3	
Military Service:	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.4	0	0.0
Percent total population			0.0				0.0				0.0				0.0				2.1	
Probation or V.A. (Youth Authority)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	5.4	0	0.0	5	5.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 23 (Continued)

Leaver Sample's Present Activity History by Ethnicity and Across Gender (N = 370)

Response	American Indian Alaskan Native (N = 5)				Asian/Pac. Islander (N = 8)				Black (N = 94)				Hispanic (N = 167)				White (N = 96)			
	Male (N = 3)		Female (N = 2)		Male (N = 5)		Female (N = 3)		Male (N = 56)		Female (N = 38)		Male (N = 87)		Female (N = 80)		Male (N = 58)		Female (N = 38)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Present Activity---																				
Placement:																				
Percent total population		0.0				0.0				3.2				3.0				0.0		
Court Placement Outside Home:	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Percent total population		0.0				0.0				2.1				0.6				0.0		
Married:	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.3	4	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Percent total population		0.0				12.5				0.0				3.6				0.0		
Project furlough:	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Percent total population		0.0				0.0				0.0				0.0				0.0		

The second question used to ascertain the future plans of the early school leavers was, "I do not want to return to school because -----." In general, there were two groups of leaver responses. Surprisingly, the first indicated passivity or ignorance on the part of the leavers. The particular response was "I have no reason(s)." The other large group of responses related to employment issues. For example, "My family has financial difficulties." Typical comments were:

- "I can't deal with the poor teacher."
- "I don't have a sitter."
- "I don't feel I need to. I'm too old."
- "I'm not happy at school."
- "It's hard after being out so long."
- "I have better things I can be doing."
- "I'm too far behind."
- "I can't deal with the gangs."
- "I lack confidence."
- "The structure does not suit me."

The third and final question in this section was, "In the future I will -----." The comments offered by the leavers included (a) going to college, (b) studying in order to become -----, (c) getting a job, (d) going to trade school, and (e) continuing with education.

Reflections about Their High Schools

Presented in Tables 24 and 25 are the leavers' personal views, both positive and negative about their particular high school. This was another area of focus for this investigation. Specifically, the intent was to obtain feedback concerning the "best" and "worse" features remembered about their schools. When questioned about positive features, the leavers most often

Table 24

Best Features of High School Reported by Leaver Sample

Category	Frequency
Socialization (meeting and making new friends)	70
Teachers	57
Activities	44
Counselors	42
Sports	26
Elective Classes	22
ESL Classes	20
School Spirit	19
Clean Campus	18
Lunch Hour	18
Close to home	18
School Atmosphere	14
Homeroom	14
Tuturing	12
No graffiti	12

Note. Several interviews gave more than one best feature and several listed none. Singular comments are not included.

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Table 25

Worst Features of High School Reported By Leaver Sample

Category	Frequency
Teachers boring and not caring	70
Crowded classes	57
Gang Violence	44
Cafeteria food	42
Closed Campus	26
Peer Pressure	22
Dirty and dangerous restrooms	20
Drugs on Campus	19
Graffiti	18
Poor Counseling	18
Racial hostility	18
Inconsistent rules	14
Hassling on campus	14

Note. Singular comments are not included.

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mentioned meeting and making new friends and the relationships established with their own gender (e.g., "I would have long talks with my girlfriend at lunch"). Another group of early school leavers recalled the favorable interactions they had with teachers, and the learning that took place in many of their classes. On occasions, the conversations held with counselors and deans were also mentioned. Other comments were:

1. a spirited school
2. the entire school
3. clean campus

Some leavers also had negative feelings about their high schools. It was quite clear what factors tended to arouse the most negative memories from leavers. By far, issues that related to the classroom teacher were remembered as the most negative about the leavers' high schools. Specifically, the leavers expressed a great deal of concern regarding teachers being boring and not caring. In addition, some leavers in this sample cited classrooms as being crowded and gang violence.

Recommendations for Improvement of High Schools The final area that received input from the early school leavers was concerned with school improvement. Specifically, the leavers were asked, "How could your high school be improved?" Their responses are found in Table 26. In general, three broad areas received the most attention from the early school leavers. They were (a) teaching and teacher related concerns, (b) school security issues, and (c) counseling matters.

The first area, teaching and teacher related concerns, received the most attention from leavers. In particular the early school leavers believed the teachers should (a) give them more opportunities to learn (e.g., "Teachers

Table 26

Leaver Sample's Suggestions to Improve High School

Category	Frequency
Hire teachers who care	70
Improve counseling	57
Have more security guards on campus	44
My school is fine the way it is	42
Improve cafeteria food	26
Remove security guards from campus	22
Solve the gang problem(s)	20
Solve the drug problem(s)	19
Improve classroom discipline	18
Remove trouble makers from the school	18
Have open campus	13
Make school more interesting	14
Provide a greater variety of classes	14
Have cleaner campus	12
Add more elective classes	12
Provide more tutors for slow students	10
Improve courtesy from office staff	8
Reform the senior high school	8
Provide more ESL electives	8
Drop students who are not serious about school	7
Provide more extra curricular activities	6
Allow on campus smoking	6
Enforce school standards	2
Hire more Spanish speaking teachers	2

Note. Several interviews gave more than one recommendation and several did not give any. Singular comments are not included.

should give more assistance with math and reading and to students who have problems"), (b) improve their pedagogical skills (e.g., "I need for my teacher to teach and interact with me rather than just hand out material for me to read" and "Help students with low grades"), (c) decrease the teacher/student ratio (e.g., "My classes are too crowded"), and (d) improve the attitudes and behavior of some teachers (e.g., "Teachers should be more sensitive and spend more time with kids" and "We need more tolerant teachers -- they snap at anything").

Another area of concern related to security issues on campus. Several comments indicated that security personnel should (a) "stop fights," (b) "keep vandals away," (c) "keep outsiders out," (d) "stop students from climbing in and out of gates," (e) decrease gang violence," and (f) "eliminate drug use on campus by getting rid of drug dealers."

Strong sentiments were also voiced concerning the availability of counseling services. Leavers frequently complained about their counselors being too busy or that they lacked the necessary time to provide assistance. More student follow-up, individualized attention and assistance, better and improved counseling, more personal counseling, and a greater involvement by college counselors were all requests made by the early school leavers.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

This chapter consists of a summary of the study's results. In interpreting these findings, it is important, however, to exercise caution. One major concern involves the issue of leaver participation. For example, were the early school leavers who volunteered to participate in this investigation different in some way from those early school leavers who did not participate? In other words, were those who comprised the sample more motivated to share their feelings and beliefs about themselves, the District and/or their schools? And, if so, were their (the participants) motivations to provide feedback based on a desire to let the truth "all hang-out" or to make a mockery of the educational system?

Another concern is the location where the majority of students were interviewed -- in their homes. Did this setting in any way impact on the type of feedback given by the leavers? One would certainly wonder, for example, whether there was a greater proclivity for leavers to give socially desirable responses, because the interviews were oftentimes in homes where education is viewed as a panacea for the family's economic and social ills, and the diploma is viewed as a vehicle for the improvement of the individual as well as the family's socio-economic status. These and other concerns would suggest that the greatest care be taken when generalizing this study's findings to other student-populations (i.e., leavers who refused to be interviewed, leavers who could not be found, etc.), to other school districts, and to other places and times.

Summary

1. Results: Dropout History. To summarize briefly, the results from the analyses appear to indicate that the typical pattern for early school leavers is to complete some portion of the school year rather than to complete a full academic year before dropping out. And, according to school records, the months of January, February, and March, reflect the greatest dropout activity. Only 39% of the 374 early school leavers were enrolled in educational institutions at the time of their interviews.

2. Results: Reasons for Leaving School. First, the early school leavers comprising this sample were quite clear about which factors did not influence their decisions to leave school prematurely. However, the data indicate there was more uncertainty when asked to give the reasons that were important. The question that comes to mind is, "Would more students return to the system if they were aware of and more definite about why they left in the first place?"

   With a more direct line of questioning, the early school leavers were better able to focus their thinking and, in turn, give specific reasons for leaving before graduating. From this feedback it appears that "typical" early school leavers (a) are bored with school; (b) find school activities, and classes a 'waste of time'; (c) are behind with their school credits; (d) make poor grades; and (e) have numerous home and family responsibilities.

3. Results: Reflections of High School Experience. Responses from the leavers interviewed indicate, in general, that the early school leavers held very positive attitudes about education, learning, and the importance of a high school diploma. Ethnic group and gender group analyses reveal, however, that differences do exist within the sample on issues related to the leavers' experiences at the secondary level and the educational values the leavers hold. One example is the Asian/Pacific Islander males, who reported "feeling lonely at high school." Their female counterparts did not. Another example can be found with the Black leavers. The males mentioned being "comfortable when speaking with their school principals"; the females reported feeling "uncomfortable speaking with principals."

   A major finding was that the majority of the early school leavers (84.4%) would not recommend to their friends or relatives that they leave high school before graduating. The need to obtain the diploma for job purposes served as the rationale for the leavers' beliefs.

4. Results: Activities and Future Plans. One striking finding that emerged from this study relates to the employment issue. First, the majority of early school leavers (71.5%) had in some way attempted to find employment after leaving their respective high school. Sadly enough, however, only about one-third (29.4%) had obtained full-time employment, and nearly one-fourth (21.7%) part-time employment. In spite of these figures, it was surprising to learn that these same leavers were not actively involved in

activities that would enable them to exert more control and power over their lives. More often than not, the phrases they voiced were "I plan to" or "I tried to" when describing their past and present behaviors as they related to employment, school attendance, etc. Future plans were also cast in vague terms such as "I want to get my diploma" or "I want to graduate."

As was previously mentioned, much attention has focused on the dropout or the early school leaver. The two phrases that were continuously given by the early school leavers to describe their high school experience were (a) school is boring; and (b) school is a waste of time. Direct requests for greater specificity about these phrases resulted in a proliferate of comments that previously focused on the quality of instruction, teachers, and the curriculum. Although the youngsters in this study placed a high value on education and learning, they had many complaints about school. What is clear is that for some of these leavers, there were many difficulties and problems for them in senior high school.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Record of Transfer

L1 [illegible]

L2 Within district---not same school (See Lx for Integration Reassignment)

L3 Public school within State

L4 Nonpublic school in California

L7 9th and 12th Grade graduates and students withdrawing with Certificate of Proficiency

Lx Participating school in paired/clustered/midpoint reassignment

exceptions when student will not be receiving any instruction)

FORM 34 H 136 REV. 12/82
STOCK NO. 821271

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT School _____ Loc. Code _____ Region _____

RECORD OF TRANSFER Month ending _____ Page _____ Telephone No. _____

	DATE LEFT	DAYS NOT ENROLLED	NAME	RECORD NO.	TRANSFERRED TO SCHOOL	CITY	STATE	BIRTH DATE Mo - Day - Year	*REASON	GRADE 7/10	GRADE 8/11	GRADE 9/12	HOMEROOM	AAR	PROGRAM	PTR	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L7	**L8	Lx	
1																								1
2																								2
3																								3
4																								4
5																								5
6																								6
7																								7
8																								8
9																								9
10																								10
11																								11
12																								12
13																								13
14																								14
15																								15
16																								16
17																								17
18																								18
19																								19
20																								20

*Reason for Transfer

1. Family Moving
2. Full-time Employment
3. Institutionalized Pupil
4. Marriage
5. Medical Exclusion
6. Military Service
7. Non-Public School
8. Opportunity Transf.
9. Oppor. Transf. Cancelled
10. Over-age
11. Permit Cancelled
12. Statement of Residence
13. Whereabouts Unknown
14. Regular
15. Curriculum
16. Sibling
17. Medical
18. Failed Competency Test
19. PWT
20. Other _____ Identify

**Ethnicity of L8 students who are listed

Number of:

American Indian [ ] Asian [ ] Black [ ] Hispanic [ ] White [ ]

112

Person to Contact Concerning This Report

Signature of Principal or Authorized Substitute

113

RETURN TO RESEARCH AND EVALUATION, ADMINISTRATION OFFICES, ROOM G 265

Appendix 2

Cumulative Record Data Summary Form

Los Angeles Unified School District
Research and Evaluation Branch

THE EARLY SCHOOL LEAVER
Summer 1984

Cumulative Record Data Summary Form

School Last Attended _____ Loc. Code_____ 2. Date Last Attended_____

Interviewed (Check) Student ____ Parent ____ Other ____

Student Name_____
Last First Initial

Address _____ _____
Street City Zip Phone

Birthdate: _____ _____ _____
month day year

Student Gender: Male ____ Female ____

Ethnicity: AI/AN____ A/PI____ B____ H____ W____

Grade When Student Left School 10 ____ 11 ____ 12 ____

Number of Siblings:

Natural Siblings: Older ____ Younger ____

Step Siblings: Older ____ Younger ____

Total (Natural and Step): _____

Residing With (Check): Both Parents ____ Mother Only ____

Father Only ____ Guardian ____ Other _____

Parents' Education (Record highest "grade" attended: K-12, 13-16, 17-18, 19-20):

Father_____ Mother_____

Test Taken at the Secondary Levels

Grade level of test administration ___Name of test_____ _____Score_____

Grade level of test administration ___Name of test_____Score_____

Grade level of test administration____Name of test_____Score_____

Appendix 3

Agreement to be Interviewed by Counselor

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Research and Evaluation Branch

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS, SUMMER 1984

AGREEMENT TO BE INTERVIEWED BY COUNSELOR

To the Interviewee:

This summer, professional counselors are interviewing young men and women who used to attend a high school in Los Angeles Unified School District. These young people left school before graduating.

We want to talk to these young people, like yourself, because we think they can help students stay in school and graduate. We need to know more than the school records show. We want to ask you about your own reasons for leaving school early, about what you're busy doing right now, and about your plans for the next few months or year.

Remember, we only want information that will help us in our work with other students. In no way can this interview be harmful or make difficulties for you.

The interview could take 15 to 30 minutes. The counselor will talk to you in person. If you are not yet 18 years old, permission for the interview will also be asked of your parent or guardian.

There is no pay for being interviewed. The information you give will help students still in school, and may also help those who left early. Maybe they will decide to finish their education.

All information you give in the interview will be kept secret and confidential. It will be seen only by the professionals working on this project. All information from all interviews will be combined together and summarized in a final report. No personal names will be reported. Also, information you give in the interview will not be available to anyone in the district.

The interview questions are easy to answer. They ask for your feelings and thoughts about school and about leaving school, and what's happening now with job or education or future plans.

You have the right not to answer a question, if you choose. You also have the right to end the interview early, if you wish. Please remember that the information you can give us is valuable because no one else knows what you know about your experience in school. If you will share that with us, we will be able to help more young people stay in school or return to school.

(Continued)

This project is the work of district staff members in several offices. The principal investigator is Dr. Romeria Tidwell, Associate Professor, University of California, Los Angeles, School of Education, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles CA 90024 (telephone: 213-825-3081). Staff coordinators are Dr. William Renfroe and Ms. Carolyn Powell, Research and Evaluation Branch, Room 6-265, 450 North Grand Ave., Los Angeles CA 90012 (telephone: 213-625-6207).

INTERVIEWEE: The Early School Leavers study has been fully explained to me. My questions have been fully and clearly answered. I have carefully read this agreement form and I understand it. Therefore, I freely and voluntarily consent and agree to participate in the interview.

Interviewee Name (printed) _____

Interviewee Signature _____

Witness (Counselor) Signature _____

Date _____ Interviewee: Today I am _____ years old.
Mo.-Day-Year

PARENT/GUARDIAN OF INTERVIEWEE: The Early School Leavers study has been fully explained to me and to my son/daughter. My questions have been fully and clearly answered. I have carefully read this agreement form and I understand it. Therefore, on behalf of my son/daughter, who is less than 18 years old, I freely and voluntarily consent and agree to let my son/daughter participate in the interview.

Parent/Guardian Name (printed) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____
Mo.-Day-Year

LW:vms 7-19-84

Appendix 4

Student Interview

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Research and Evaluation Branch

THE EARLY SCHOOL LEAVER, SUMMER 1984

STUDENT INTERVIEW

1. What grade were you in when you left high school? _____

2. Did you complete the entire school year or only part of the school year of your last grade? _____ Entire Year _____ Part of Year

3. Give the month and year that you last attended school. _____ Month _____ Year

4. Why did you leave high school before graduation? (Write a brief answer).

_____

_____

5. Were any of the following reasons important in your decision to leave high school? (Check "yes" or "no" for each item):

YES	NO	
_____	_____	Transportation problems
_____	_____	Poor grades
_____	_____	Marriage
_____	_____	Financial difficulties
_____	_____	Teacher problems
_____	_____	Health
_____	_____	Suspension or Expulsion
_____	_____	Students at the school
_____	_____	Hostile school
_____	_____	Family reasons
_____	_____	School behavior
_____	_____	18 years or more
_____	_____	Juvenile Court Placement
_____	_____	Work responsibilities
_____	_____	Other reasons? _____

_____

_____

6. Circle the response on the scale that best describes how you feel about each statement. Remember there are no right or wrong answers.

Directions for Recording Responses:

Circle SA if you STRONGLY AGREE
Circle A if you AGREE
Circle U if you are UNCERTAIN
Circle D if you DISAGREE
Circle SD if you STRONGLY DISAGREE

SA	A	U	D	SD	My expectations about school were too high.
SA	A	U	D	SD	I felt lonely when I was in high school.
SA	A	U	D	SD	The teachers at my high school were open to me.
SA	A	U	D	SD	I believe education plays a meaningful role in shaping my life.
SA	A	U	D	SD	If I wished to speak to my high school principal, I felt comfortable in doing so.
SA	A	U	D	SD	I believed it was important to work for good grades in high school.
SA	A	U	D	SD	My high school encouraged its students to be active in school affairs and activities.
SA	A	U	D	SD	I believe it was important to graduate from high school and receive my high school diploma.
SA	A	U	D	SD	If I wanted to talk with my high school counselor, I was sure that the counselor would speak with me.
SA	A	U	D	SD	My interest in school was absent by the time I reached high school.
SA	A	U	D	SD	I believe learning is important.
SA	A	U	D	SD	I was smart enough and possessed the necessary abilities to graduate from high school.

7. Would you recommend to your friends or relatives that they leave school before graduating?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Maybe, depending on their needs.

Explain your answer: Why? _____

_____

8. Since leaving high school have you done any of the following activities: (Check "yes" or "no" for each item).

YES	NO	
____	____	Enrolled in a technical school
____	____	Enrolled in an adult school
____	____	Entered military service
____	____	Sought employment
____	____	Enrolled in regular school
____	____	Enrolled in continuation school
____	____	Other: _____
		_____

9. At the present time I am _____. (Check the response or responses that best describe you).

_____ Employed full-time

_____ Employed part-time

_____ Not employed

_____ Military service

_____ Probation or Y.A. placement

_____ Court placement outside home

_____ Married

_____ Project Furlough

_____ Other: _____

_____

Complete each sentence.

10. I want to return to school because _____.

11. I do not want to return to school because _____.

12. In the future I will _____.

13. What do you remember as the <u>best</u> features of your high school? (Give three responses).

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

14. What do you remember as the <u>worse</u> features of your high school? (Give three responses).

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

15. How could your high school be improved? (Give three responses).

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

THANK YOU!

Appendix 5

Completion Check Sheet

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Research and Evaluation Branch

THE EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS
Summer 1984

Completion Check Sheet

Student _____ Birthdate _____

School _____

Appointment Date _____

Time _____

Rescheduled _____

Cumulative Record Data Summary Form Completed _____

Student Interview Completed _____

Research Study Consent signed _____

Appendix 6

PSA Counselor Feedback Form

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Research and Evaluation Branch

THE EARLY SCHOOL LEAVER

Summer 1984

PSA COUNSELOR FEEDBACK FORM

1. Motivational aspects of student regarding high school experience, teachers, support staff, administrators, curriculum:

2. Impressions regarding student's feelings about <u>leaving</u> high school before graduating:

3. Impressions regarding student's feelings about <u>returning</u> to high school:

4. Judgements about student's satisfaction with present life:

5. Judgements about student's satisfaction with future plans:

6. Impressions about home environment of student: